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ASPECTS OF THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASS VIEWED FROM
THE WORKING MEN'S CLUB.

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ABSTRACT

Working Men's Club were part of the Victorian reform ideology. An attempt, when Mechanics' Institutes failed to cope with, at worst a seriously threatening, at best an inconveniently fractious social group. Quickly taken over by the working class from the early patronage of their 'betters'; overturning the temperance based educative functions, the clubs became an important element in the working-class culture which arose in response to the poverty, subordination, degradation and indignity visited on the working class by industrial capitalism. This culture was, apart from the odd outburst, a passive culture. It was different from the surrounding bourgeoisie culture having resisted attempts at its improvement by the middle classes, but it was by no means threatening. Working-class culture emphasised collectivism and solidarity, a sharing and co-operative coping with the uncertainties of capitalism. This was reflected in the Working Men's Club. These became the expression of solidaristic collectivism in the local community. Rooted in locality, clubs became the focus of much working-class leisure. Never seriously political, they avoided association with any political party and concentrated on pleasure. As the working class changed, in the context of the 'welfare state', higher wages and improved work conditions, so too did the clubs. Increasingly the working class abandoned the solidarism of former years and took to itself the individualistic values of the market place. Only that which was bought has value. People were to be judged by their possessions rather than on the basis of wider more human considerations. Working Men's Clubs aptly reflect these changes. No longer places for coping with the common predicament they have become

stages for the display of the new values of consumption.

A true reflection of the market place.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

AND

APPROACHES TO STUDY

What constitutes the proper subject-matter of sociology is not unproblematic. In fact much effort has always gone into the discussion of the nature of the enterprise; perhaps more than other disciplines. The student of sociology confronts earlier than those in other disciplines, the question of the nature of his chosen activity. What is sociology is a problem long before what is history or physics. Perhaps this suggests some uncertainty on the part of sociologists or confidence on the part of practitioners in other areas of intellectual activity. What ever, the problem remains. Why do sociologists pursue an interest in one area of the discipline rather than another? What are the bases of choice of subject matter? Conventionally the answer arises from the distinction between the theoretical aspects of sociology and the substantive issues in which individual sociologists get involved. Thus, choice of subject is justified by reference to its theoretical significance. Following on from this subjects are justified in terms of the problems they pose which require investigation and how these investigations should proceed. Finally there is the bearing that these problems have upon sociology in general.

In the real world of people 'doing' sociology, interest in an area for study is more confused. Ideas may be generated from trifling interests, personal involvement, a determined desire to find out and on the grander theoretical objectives. Thus, some of the forces at work in deciding upon an area of study may be:

- the influence of current fashion within the discipline.
- intrinsic interest in the subject.

often subjects are officially defined as problems and thus become the subject of study. (1)

the time and resources available will limit the extent of the enterprise.

sections of the population differ in their accessibility, and the ease with which they may be contacted.

interest in a particular field may arise in response to current changes in society which may be seen as problematic.

interest in a specific subject may stem fairly directly from sociological theory and may derive impetus from a particular set of sociological problems.

With these considerations in mind I will proceed to outline my route to concern with Working Men's Clubs as a proper area for sociological study. (2)

After examining some of the problems outlined below, the central issue of this thesis will be the relationship between that group referred to as the working class (3), who have long endured low status, little power and a generally reduced life chance (4), and the wider society of which they are a part. It is my intention to examine this relationship by taking what may be described as a classical working-class institution, the Working Men's Club, and examining the historical growth of the institution and the social relations involved, within a specific geographical area.

My interest in Working Men's Clubs, as leading to some form of sociological understanding of the position of the working class within society, was stimulated by three broad factors. One, the major orienting factor, was membership of Working Men's Clubs and the observations and impressions I gained from their use. Two, my interest in sociology and history made me begin to think about the clubs in more detail than would perhaps otherwise have been the case. At this point I moved to a tentative examination of the literature, both historical and sociological

which may have been expected to include some reference to Working Men's Clubs. Here was a major impetus to further effort: short of being extensively represented as an important dimension of the working class experience, and a locale within which this experience was 'lived'; and further, as throwing light on the genesis of a large social group, these clubs were all but ignored. Mentioned briefly in some sociological research devoted to other, but related matters, and accorded their chronological place, with little comment, in some history books, it seems that with one or two exceptions, Working Men's Clubs have received little attention from serious scholars, either in history or sociology. (5)

Why have Working Men's Clubs been thus neglected? They are neither inaccessible nor lacking in intrinsic interest. They attract and provide a service for something like 10% of the population and at the most basic of levels deals with substantial amounts of money. One club known to me has sales of over £150,000 per year. Against this they are not a fashionable topic for research, nor are they seen as problematic either sociologically or officially. Official interest centres on infringement of membership rules, health and safety regulations, and the implications of fiscal regulations. From a sociological point of view their neglect seems to derive from the fact that they are seen as having little theoretical significance. They have attracted no attention as leisure activities, as organisations, as voluntary associations nor as dimensions of the working-class experience. Which brings me to another aspect of the problem and my third reason for interest in Working Men's Clubs.

The lack of serious research was an obvious omission. However, more than this; in the accounts which did exist the clubs rarely emerged as I knew them to be. Most efforts to deal with the clubs, albeit that they were part of research in which the clubs were not a central concern, gave the strong impression of short academic association, rather than any attachment. Intuition, often romantic, was grafted onto sociological language and ideas to support broader generalisations about the clubs and the working class which may or may not have any empirical or critical substance.

As for the vast literature on the working class, this seemed to lack theoretical cohesion. After the move from accounts of the pathology of working-class life immediately after the war, (6) there followed the discovery, and acceptance, of something called 'working-class culture'. Attention was now focussed on the 'normality' of working-class life (7), but also with some concern at its variance and sometimes conflict with other institutions like the educational system (8). Later still, in the 1960's attention was directed at the newly affluent working-class and the changes, brought about by high wages and high employment, in working-class life, or at least in the lives of some working-class people (9). In all this there seemed to be little to connect the descriptive, empirical accounts of the working class to wider theoretical statements about the nature of advanced capitalist society, and the relationship to it of the working class. This deficiency has to some extent been made good in work published since the original idea for this thesis (10) and fuller attention will be paid to this work in a later chapter dealing with the treatment of the working class at the hands of sociologists,

historians and literateurs.

My orientation to this thesis thus derives from the three sets of factors outlined above. Starting from observations on the ground deriving from participation in the activities of Working Men's Clubs, I moved to an awareness of the paucity of research, both historical and sociological, into the clubs, and finally became convinced that a study of Working Men's Clubs could give rise to worthwhile insights into and generalisations about class and class relations in modern Britain.

Having decided that Working Men's Clubs are worth studying the next problem is one of approach. It is to this that I now wish to turn since it is worth discussing this in some detail before settling on a particular approach. The main approaches considered were:

- to look at the Working Men's Club in the context of something which might be loosely called the sociology of leisure.

- to look at Working Men's Clubs as part of a sociology of community.

- to look at Working Men's Clubs as examples of voluntary associations and to analyse them within a typology of such associations.

- to look at Working Men's Clubs as types of organisations and explore them in the context of organisational theory.

- to look at Working Men's Clubs in terms of contribution they make to helping people accommodate to certain changes in the wider society.

- to look at Working Men's Clubs as being specifically related to something which may be called the 'working-class experience' and examining them for the contribution they may make to an understanding of aspects of social stratification in modern Britain.

I wish now to explore some of the issues raised by these several approaches for studying Working Men's Clubs, before tackling what I see as the main issue.

The sociology of leisure idea has much appeal. There is little doubt that the participation in the activities of Working Men's Clubs, with the exception of specific work roles like steward, or informal work roles like secretary, treasurer, etc., is non work activity, more exactly leisure. Moreover, we are talking about the leisure (11) activity of some 20% of the population (12). If 'Working Men's Club like organisations are included: British Legion Clubs, Post Office Clubs, Transport Clubs, Co-Op Clubs, Labour Clubs, many of which are affiliated to the Club and Institute Union, the central organising body of the club movement in Britain, then the membership figure must be nearer to 16%-20%.

In addition, clubs are open some 7½ hours per day 7 days per week every week. The range of activity is enormous. From the actual social and economic control of the clubs to the more obvious leisure activities of darts, beer drinking, cards, dominoes, snooker and billiards, dances, concerts, bingo, etc. through to the clubs within clubs for angling, gardening, football, bowls, etc. the Working Men's Clubs provide facilities for almost all leisure activities associated with the working class. This approach to Working Men's Clubs from the point of view of the sociology of leisure would, I am sure, prove fruitful. However, comparison with other leisure institutions would need to be made; both those offering similar services to the clubs, for example pubs, sports clubs, etc.; and those offering different services, for example churches, vocational courses at the local college. Also people's choices between various leisure activity would need to be explored. Not only would this fairly empirical work be beyond my time and resources,

but there would be an additional need to relate the empirical work to some theoretical framework. For example Parker's work on the relationship between work and non work could be explored in some depth (13). Apart from the size of the task in order to do justice to this theme my central interest lies with the clubs and not in the sociology of leisure. As stated earlier it is their working classness which is of interest. Since the bulk of Working Men's Clubs are in working-class areas it seemed that the working class theme could be taken up by an examination of the relationship between Working Men's Clubs and the communities which they served.

To incorporate a study of Working Men's Clubs into the sociology of community is to raise the question of the nature of such an enterprise. Following Stacey, it is possible to suggest that:

"It is doubtful whether the concept 'community studies' refers to a useful abstraction" (14)

and it has neither rationale nor theoretical use. However while it may be necessary to rule out geographical determinism, it does not rule out the study of social relations within a particular area. What Stacey (15) refers to as 'locality studies'. She suggests one or two types of such study. One is the study of particular institutions as they are manifest in specific areas. Much as the family, for example, has been studied in a number of places. The other approach is concerned with the interrelation of institutions in a locality. Such an approach, there is no hard and fast distinction between the two approaches, may be justified, in part at least, by recognition of the fact that not only do institutions persist in areas over time, for example Working Men's Clubs; but also a large number of

people stay in one place for much of their lives. In many cases they identify with the place. Thus it may be possible to study the nature and meaning of people's attachment to places rather than merely outline the geographically confined relationships. One would thus be left with the choice of subject: industry, politics, religion, clubs, or all of these. Ideally we should perhaps look at the 'intersection' of all these. Working Men's Clubs on this score may be an important point of intersection. Here there may be overlaps between work, politics, kinship and leisure and could afford an interesting line of research to delineate these interrelationships. However, concentrating on Working Men's Clubs only may provide too narrow a focus and in any event would require a large amount of empirical work with questionnaire and interview which I have neither the time nor the resources to conduct. The best that could be achieved would be to attempt some easily quantifiable overlaps between clubs and aspects of the locality, for example, demographic, occupational, socio-economic structure, etc. Indeed such information may be necessary for what ever approach is adopted. However, it could not be seen as an end in itself.

It may be possible to abandon notions of coping with the whole local community and adopt a 'networks' (17) and 'texture of social relations' approach. Roughly this could involve the construction, for certain selected individuals within the club, their networks of social relations. This may then allow some statements about the density of role texture in a particular locality. While this too would, on reflection, be unmanageable, it also suffers two other weaknesses. One is that the Working Men's Club

would be all but ignored. It would become a mere 'sampling frame' from which 'respondents' were chosen, when my real interest lies in the club. Further, as in the case mentioned above, it would only provide a massive amount of empirical data which would still need to be incorporated into a wider framework but would in part have determined that framework. Aspects of which are discussed below.

Some thought was next given to what initially appeared to be a more promising approach. That is to examine the social significance of Working Men's Clubs as voluntary associations. The notion of 'social significance' would to some degree incorporate aspects of the community studies approach outlined above. However, the difference would lie in the emphasis on their being voluntary associations. Since it seems likely that there is a wide variation both between localities and within them as to the nature of voluntary associations in general and Working Men's Clubs in particular, the 'social significance' of the clubs will be fairly local. The point of research from this angle would be to outline the nature of the collectivity which the Working Men's Club represents and the meanings attached to membership within the locality. However, since we are subsuming the clubs under the more general and wider definition of voluntary association, this raises problems. Such definitions as those which turn on like minded people joining together to pursue common interests, seem to ignore the fact that most voluntary associations exist already and people 'join' rather than 'create' them. This is especially the case with the Working Men's Club, although historically the setting up of individual clubs must have something of this motivation about it. Even here however, the specific

circumstances and meanings involved are of primary importance. Michael Banton suggests:

"An association is a group organised for the pursuit of one interest or several interests in common. Associations are usually contrasted with involuntary groupings serving a greater variety of ends such as kin groups...." (17)

This presents real difficulties. For example it is not always easy to characterise the aims and interests of voluntary groups, especially where these change over time.

Dennis, Henriques and Slaughter suggest that:

"the Working Men's Club is a co-operative for the purchase and sale of beer" (18)

However, although this may do justice to the economic rationale, it hardly does justice to its wider social role and the vast and diffuse sets of activities which constitute the Working Men's Club. Even on the point of economic rationale the point about beer, obvious to an outsider perhaps, may not be true. In every club that I know the main source of income, and in many the means by which the club continues to exist, is the fruit machine. It is doubtful if many members see the primary goal of the club as that of providing facilities for playing fruit machines. Or even that their playing them makes anything but a marginal contribution to the running of the club.

Other problems arise in any attempt to disentangle the formal aims of voluntary associations from the actual practices of members. This is especially the case with the Working Men's Club. Is it possible to distinguish between manifest and latent functions of the clubs? The manifest function may be economic while its latent function may be more diffuse social ones. Or, even more complicatedly, again quoting from Dennis et al:

"The objective of the Ashton Clubs are set out in the following terms: 'The Club is established for the purpose of providing for working men the means of social intercourse, mutual helpfulness, mental and moral improvement and rational recreation.'" (19)

They go on to say:

"The reality is somewhat different. The means of social intercourse are certainly provided and there is a certain amount of mutual helpfulness, but the clubs can scarcely be said to be seriously concerned with mental and moral improvement or rational recreation." (20)

What are the functions here, manifest or latent? And, is it worth pursuing such analysis? The main difficulty seems to be the imputation of functions which are not intended or recognised. Is it the case that the 'latent' functions of the Working Men's Clubs are not intended or recognised members, or do they, or the sociologists, recognise these but prefer to emphasise other aims? See my note on 'rational recreation' below. If he (the sociologist) imputes latent functions he will more than likely get it wrong. If he attempts to elicit participants definitions of the situation, they are no longer latent, and all the problems start all over again. Why do people join and participate in voluntary associations, what purpose do they serve and what functions do they serve and for whom? Another problem in terms of the 'pursuit of interest' idea is that it seems to ignore the social situation in which such associations operate. For example limitations on membership, for instance by sex or race. Or, in the case of the Working Men's Club, the problem of working classness, may not be related to specific interest pursued by the association or club.

From a systems or functionalist point of view analysis could proceed at two levels. One would be to analyse the club as such and to outline how the various 'functions'

are performed. 'Goal attainment' may be achieved by the committee of the club, elected by the members and thus giving some 'democratic' control over decisions. Adaption, the organisation of resources to achieve the specified goals, will also be performed by this group. Specific roles within the committee: secretary, treasurer, etc., would be concerned with particular aspects of this function. Against this 'members' of the club would, by virtue of their pursuit of leisure activities in informal settings and in informal cliques and groups, perform the integrative and pattern maintenance functions. With this framework it may be possible to examine the Working Men's Club from a number of stand points:

to elucidate the formal and informal structure of the club and assess the degree to which and how 'functions' are performed.

to examine the proposition that Working Men's Clubs are systems of action pursuing contradictory goals or performing contradictory functions. On the one hand are the instrumental goals of a largely economic kind and on the other are the affective or expressive goals based on shared values and the pursuit of non-instrumental activity. Some tension may thus arise and an examination of the means by which these tensions are resolved would give some insight into the workings of the club.

While this approach may yield some insights they still suffer from the problems outlined above connected with 'goals': 'function' would seem to fair no better.

A second possibility within a broadly systems approach may be to see clubs as performing certain functions within a wider local setting. Perhaps integration, by education, socialisation and the preservation and reinforcement of socially shared values; and adaption, possibly to low status, low income and lack of power by the provision of outlets for energies, skills and interests not realised in other settings, for example, work. Additionally, the clubs

may allow for certain expressive activities for example through groups of card players meeting regularly, or through more communal activity like concerts, dances or bingo. Applying this framework to Working Men's Clubs would seem to raise the following problems:

it takes the clubs as given and not the product of a historical process.

it ignores the collectivity which makes up the Working Men's Club. Namely people who share a common position in the productive process and who may have a consciousness of this common position which may impinge on institutions to which they belong.

it fails to clarify the relationship between Working Men's Clubs and other collectivities.

'goals' or 'functions' when applied to collectivities are, as we have seen, almost impossible to specify.

it would almost be impossible to incorporate members definitions of their situation into such a framework.

It may be possible, still with a loosely Parsonian framework, to deal with the last two points by placing more emphasis on instrumental and expressive orientations and less on specific goals or functions. Thus instrumental orientations would be those in which cognitive considerations were paramount and in which the end of the activity may lie in the future. Expressive orientations would be those in which actions were directed at emotional gratification in the short run and in which non-cognitive considerations are primary. Lockwood and Goldthorpe make such a distinction in their attempt to classify the associational membership of their respondents (21). They distinguish three types of 'function': diffuse, intermediate, specific. Then breaking down the composition of the membership by occupation locate Working Men's Clubs in the 'diffuse, predominantly manual' category.

Here it may be possible to treat instrumental and expressive

orientation as polar types. The continuum between them making it possible to provide a basis for the definition of their situation by members of the club. It may also cope with the 'goals' problem since Working Men's Clubs will come close to the expressive end of the continuum, thus allowing for the diffuse activities pursued in clubs. Moreover, using and extending this distinction, it may be possible to examine the proposition that, in the context of the declining importance of community relationships (22), and increasingly 'instrumental' values allied to 'privatisation' and a 'pecuniary' model of society (23), Working Men's Clubs are an important basis for affective and expressive interaction. Alternatively if the distinction between primary and secondary groups (24) is maintained Working Men's Clubs may be classified as primary groups and seen as extending primary group relations rather than as alternatives. Either way, an examination of the clubs in these terms may lead to an answer to the problem of the extent to which the social relations of a 'gemeinschaft' type persist in a society which is increasingly formalised, impersonalised and institutionalised (25).

A similar formulation may be used to examine the way in which the clubs themselves reflect a shift to instrumental from expressive orientations. This for example may be the case when clubs founded in older, traditional working class areas now draw on members from newer more affluent occupations, brought about by, for example, local authority housing policy and natural changes in the population and occupational structure of an area.

The approach outlined above might be examined by the investigation of some or all of the following:

the extent of variations in Working Men's Clubs within and between specific areas.

in mining and former mining areas, or at least in those areas with 'heavy' industry, to what extent are club members still drawn from these occupational groups?

to what extent have members been known to each other over a long period of time, or otherwise?

to what extent are members drawn from the locality or a wider area?

what impact on club membership does the ageing of the population have? Also what is the impact of migration into the area?

what is the impact of the changing occupational structure?

to what extent are clubs occupationally homogeneous such that work relationships are reinforced in leisure time?

to what extent are other social relations reinforced or broken down by club membership?

what is the degree of expressive or instrumental orientation?

why do people still use clubs in preference to, or in addition to, pubs?

Any, or all, of the approaches seemed a possible and fruitful basis for an examination of Working Men's Clubs but they seemed to suffer certain crucial drawbacks:

they either place too much emphasis on the clubs as clubs, or ignore the clubs and concentrate on wider, if local, social relationships of which the clubs are a part. While the clubs are of some intrinsic interest as 'organisations' or 'associations', or whatever, examination in these terms is a necessary but not sufficient part of understanding either them or the wider social arrangements which gave rise to, and sustain them. To concentrate on the 'locality' or 'community' is to all but ignore the clubs as such. Some means must be found to combine an examination of the clubs with some appreciation of their contribution to and reflection of wider social arrangements.

further, each of the approaches mentioned so far takes the clubs as given, ignoring any historical processes which gave rise to them and to which they were a response.

Working Men's Clubs exist in the context of a specific mode of economic organisation and have evolved in conjunction with and as a reflection of this mode or organisation.

Additionally the members of the clubs have been historically

and continue to be located in the productive process of this mode of economic organisation. As was suggested above this mode of economic organisation involves inequities of control of scarce resources, status and power. These factors must be taken into account in an examination of Working Men's Clubs and insight gained by exploring the interrelationship between the clubs and the inequalities outlined above.

Examination must, it seems to me, proceed both historically and sociologically with the following model in mind. (26) Instead of being organised around a consensus of values, social systems may be thought of as involving conflict situations at central points. Such conflicts lying anywhere between the extremes of peaceful bargaining in the market place and open violence. This situation will produce a plural society, in which there are two or more classes, each of which will provide a relatively self-contained system for its members. The activities of the members take on sociological meaning and must be explained by reference to the group's interest in the conflict situation. The social institutions and culture of the subject-class are geared to, and explicable in, terms of the class's interest in the conflict situation. In most cases the conflict situation will be marked by an unequal balance of power in which one class will emerge as the ruling class. Such a class will continually seek to gain recognition of the legitimacy of its position amongst members of the subject class by control of the institutional order and in particular the agencies of socialisation and social control. The degree to which the ruling group is successful in getting its version of reality accepted, or the degree to which they can put their

position beyond reasonable or successful challenge will be, it is contended, reflected in the characteristics of the institutions of the subordinate groups.

Thus, the ruling group which emerged out of the social relations of industrial capitalism, has placed its position beyond reasonable assault by involving subordinate groups in certain aspects of decision making, involvement in parliamentary democracy via the Labour Party for example, while at the same time maintaining almost complete control over the means of production. Within this the subordinate group has developed its own 'modes of living, a separate culture and distinguishable institutions which reflect these.

Working Men's Clubs are one such institutions.

However, before looking at the origins and growth of the Working Men's Club Movement it is necessary to look more closely at the class which these clubs were designed to serve.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. This point has perhaps got most force in the area of social problems and deviance and raises issues beyond the scope of this essay. Modern work of the interactionist and phenomenology schools see both official counting procedures and the means by which activities become defined as problems, as legitimate areas of sociological investigation in themselves.
2. It is not part of my intention to add to that stock of knowledge which sees Working Men's Clubs as places of beery indulgence, bingo and smokey gregariousness with little thought for tomorrow. Such accounts, with more or less emphasis, may be found in:

Norman DENNIS, Fernando HENRIQUES, Clifford SLAUGHTER:
Coal is Our Life: Tavistock, 2nd edition, 1969, Ch. IV;
Leisure.

Brian JACKSON: Working Class Community: Pelican 1972,
Ch 4; At the Club.

R.C. TAYLOR: The Implications of Migration from the
Durham Coalfield: An Anthropological Study, Unpublished
Ph.D., Durham 1966, Ch 1.

It is worth looking at the latter work more closely. On the basis of one Saturday evening, and it is hoped, some prior knowledge, he suggests that, as a 'ceremony' the Working Man's Club is characterised by, 'near universal participation' 'regularity' 'punctiliousness' a place in which 'people in daily face-to-face contact come together for a good time'. His overriding impression is one of uninhibited enjoyment, conversation, music, alcohol and an 'atmosphere of noisy indulgence'. The main aim of the evening is 'drink' 'talk' 'try

luck at bingo': 'no other considerations intrude'
the club is the apotheosis of 'short-term hedonism'.
See too: DENNIS et al, op.cit. p 153:

"The Working Men's Club can therefore be seen to
reflect in their behaviour as organisations the
thriftlessness of their members."

Taylor goes on to quote with approval the notion that
the clubs are arenas of 'vigorous frivolity' which
results from insecurity at work and a 'consciousness
of the limitations of his way of life'. This with
small differences of emphasis, and more or less approval,
is how the Working Men's Club has been presented in
sociological literature.

3. A definition at this stage of 'working class' would
pre-empt much of the following discussion, especially
the section dealing with the way the working class has
been dealt with in sociology and literature. For the
present I propose that the working class is: the group
of people whose role in the productive process (work)
involves the use of manual skills, more often than not
physical strength, and who are called upon to deal
with 'things' rather than 'ideas'. This manual skill
is the only saleable commodity which they possess.
Additionally this group will have a position of sub-
ordination vis-a-vis other groups in society. This
is not to ignore the perceptual and subjective aspects
of the matter, nor the interactional components. Even
less is to overlook the problematic nature of such
terms as, 'work' 'manual skills' 'things' 'ideas'.
It is merely to begin at the beginning. To get a rough
idea of what we are talking about.
4. Massive amounts of empirical research from governments,

interested pressure groups and social scientists establishes beyond doubt the fact of startling inequalities within modern British society. Commenting on inequalities, in a recent symposium devoted to the issue:

Dorothy WEDDERBURN (ed): Poverty, Inequality and Class Structure, Cambridge, 1974, John GOLDTHORPE: Social inequality and social integration in modern Britain:

says:

"... social inequality, in societies such as ours, is manifested in a very wide variety of ways.... in addition to great inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth, further marked inequalities are involved in the ways in which economic rewards are actually gained, most importantly, in the content of work tasks and roles.....

Social inequality...can be thought of as involving differences in social power and advantage: power being the capacity to mobilise resources to bring about a desired state of affairs; advantage, the possession of or control over, whatever in society is valued and scarce....power and advantage are closely related and in their very nature convertible.....In this perspective, the way in which inequality structures virtually the whole of social life can be readily understood.."

For a more recent and comprehensive study of inequalities in Britain see: John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLAR: Class in a Capitalist Society, Pelican 1976, Part 1, P. 2, where they say:

"Our first concern in this book, then, is with the hard core of class--with the substance and structural sources of inequality, irrespective of how people react to the experience of inequality; with what Marx described as 'class in itself'. Only after that can we take up the second major set of issues--those which concern responses to class division. The critical question here is whether and how objective cleavages of power, wealth, security and opportunity give rise to groups whose members are conscious of a common identity....."

Further to this consciousness is the problem of the degree to which a common 'culture' and associated practices arise, reflected in specific institutions

and increased interaction between members of the group: Working Men's Clubs may be one such institution and the setting for such interaction.

5. The few accounts of Working Men's Clubs known to me are listed in note 2. For the history, the most complete and sympathetic account is probably:

John TAYLOR: From Self Help to Glamour: the Working Man's Club 1860-1972, History Workshop Pamphlet No. 7.

This is a detailed historical account based on the publications of the Club and Institute Union. The Club and Institute Union themselves published an uninspired history to celebrate their centenary in 1962:

George TREMLETT: The First Century, The Working Men's Club and Institute Union 1962. A better account is to be found in: R.N. PRICE: The Working Men's Club Movement and Victorian Reform Ideology; Victorian Studies Vol 15 1971. p 118. In which he says:

"Labour historiography has totally ignored the clubs".

However he does go on to mention: G.D.H. COLE and Raymond POSTGATE: The Common People 1746-1946 (2nd ed; London 1960) pp 378-379, who go on to dismiss the clubs as; 'bare and beery'. Raymond POSTGATE: The Builders History, London 1923, p.199, is more sympathetic.

6. Classics of this kind are:

Elizabeth SPINLEY: The Deprived and the Privileged. R.K.P. 1953.

Madelaine KEER, The People of Ship Street, R.K.P. 1958.

Moree PANATH: Brach Street, Alan & Unwin, 1944

Detailed accounts of each of these studies and comments upon them may be found in: JOSEPHINE KLEIN: Samples from English Culture; R.K.P. 1965, Vol; 1.

7. Michael YOUNG and Peter WILLMOTT: Family and Kinship in East London. R.K.P. 1957. Also: Peter TOWNSEND: Family Life of Old People. R.K.P. 1951. In fact the bulk of the work of the Institute of Community Studies put 'working-class culture' on the road to respectability. Sadly by the time it was discovered it was almost dead, drowned in a sea of 'embourgeoisement'. Perhaps its 'discovery' hastened its decline!
8. Two examples will serve to illustrate the point: Brian JACKSON and Dennis MARSDEN: Education and the Working Class R.K.P. 1962, stands as a sensitive and perceptive account. Michael CARTER: The Home School and Work, Pergamon 1962, is interesting since, recognising that the working class was not homogeneous, and that some, for whatever reason, had points of reference outside the working class. In the language of reference group sociology, while their membership and comparative reference groups may have been amongst manual workers, their normative reference group was amongst non-manual workers. Thus they had an aspirational (at least for their children) view of the social order. Others, the bulk of the sample, described by Carter as, 'solid working class' had all reference points within the working class. Yet another group separate from the other two he described as 'rough, deprived and underprivileged'. A group who had to make special adjustments to their social and economic

failure. Later incorporated into the 'culture of poverty' and the recipients of programmes of 'compensatory education'.

9. Interest in this aspect of working class life owes much to the important article: David LOCKWOOD: Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society: Sociological Review: Vol; 14, No 3 November 1966. Recently reprinted in full in the symposium: Martin BULMER (ed); Working Class Images of Society, R.K.P. 1975 Ch 2.

This was followed by: John GOLDTHORPE, David LOCKWOOD Frank BECHHOFFER, Jennifer PLATT: The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, Cambridge 1969.

10. Major works here are:

Frank PARKIN: Class, Inequality and the Political Order, Palladin 1972

Michael Mann: Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, MacMillan 1973.

Martin BULMER: op.cit.

This change of direction was away from pathological accounts of the working class and its conflict with other institutions or, alternatively, a romantic commitment to delineating the sturdy resilience of working-class culture, to wider sociological considerations. Broadly these were greater emphasis on aspects of consciousness as reflected in images of social reality, and consideration of the problem of how social order is achieved in the context of the facts of social inequality.

11. The important relationship between work and leisure

has been explored most fully in Britain by S.R. PARKER. See for example discussion in: PARKER, BROWN, CHILD and SMITH: Sociology of Industry, George Allen and Unwin 1968, Ch.14, pp 158-166.

12. Royal Commission on Local Government Research Study 9: Community Attitude Survey: England: 1969, Table 53, p. 54.
13. PARKER op.cit; proposes that work and leisure may be related in one of the following ways: extension: leisure and work are similar in content, no sharpe distinction between the two and with central life interest within the sphere of work rather than in family or leisure. Work here involves intrinsic satisfactions associated with high autonomy and the use of most abilities. Typical jobs may be, teachers, doctors, social workers and some skilled manual workers. Neutrality: here leisure is somewhat different from work, with central life interest in family and or leisure. Work involves some autonomy and the use of a moderate number of skills in such jobs as clerical work, minor professional and the like. Opposition: leisure and work are sharply demarcated. Little autonomy at work, use of a narrow range of abilities only. Function of leisure tends to be recuperation. Mainly found amongst manual workers especially those in 'extreme' occupations for example, mining, steel work, ship building, etc. Although this model ignores the meanings attached both to work and leisure it may provide a useful framework for the analysis of Working Men's Clubs as aspects of leisure. Presumably clubs and their members would exemplify the work leisure relationship which Parker calls opposition..

14. Margaret STACEY: The Myth of Community Studies,
B.J.S. No 2, 1969, pp 134-147. For the view that
the study of one institution in a specific locality
is not a sufficient part of community studies see:
Colin BELL and Howard NEUBY: Community Studies, Allen
and Unwin, 1971:

"The study of one social institution within a
locality, such as the family in Bethnal Green,
does not meet the minimal definition of a community
study...."
15. STACEY op cit.
16. Developed by J.A. BARNES: Class and Committees in a
Norwegian Island Parish, Human Relations Vol. VII,
No. 1 1954, and used by: Elizabeth BOTT: Family and
Social Networks, Tavistock 1957 to explore aspects of
'conjugal role relationships' amongst urban families,
the concept of networks has been little used since
although described by Ronald FRANKENBERG: Communities
in Britain, Pelican Original 1967, p 242, as:

"the first major advance in the language of socio-
logy since role..."

See also: BELL and NEUBY op cit; p 53:

"What little empirical data there is relating to
social networks leads us to believe that it is
indeed a powerful analytical tool and that the two
most powerful independent variables working on the
structure and content of the social network are
class and family circle. When a satisfactory way
of recording social networks has been worked out,
then we shall be well on the way to having compara-
ble and theoretically relevant data on communities."
17. Michael BANTON: Definitions of 'Voluntary Association'
International Encyclopaedia of Social Science 1968.
18. Norman DENNIS, Fernando HENRIQUES and Clifford SLAUGHTER
op cit; p 153.

19. ibid. p.143. This formula is common and usually incorporated in the club rules. In all the clubs that I am aware of the exact words are included in the rule books issued to all members on joining.
20. ibid. p.143. This comment raises an interesting point about the use of the term 'rational' in conjunction with recreation. While it is difficult to know exactly what the drafters of Working Men's Clubs rules had in mind, it is equally difficult, beyond a purely situational definition, to know what 'rational recreation' means. There seems to be no reason why bingo, billiards and beer drinking, are any less 'rational' than other forms of recreation. The authors seem to have in mind the high minded assumption that only 'constructive or instructive' leisure (university extra-mural type courses?) is rational; or even worse, they hark back to the paternalistic concern for moral education which stimulated the founders of Club and Institute Union. For the founder of the CIU Rev. Henry SOLLY, 'rational amusements' were "chess, draughts, readings of poetry and fiction, cheap concerts and recitations". SOLLY COLLECTION: Vol 2, pp 13-14 quoted in Richard PRICE op cit.
- Two points may be made: quoting from a CIU annual report;

"Beaumont Hall...of Leicester University, was the venue for our two schools...Ninety-six club men attended....NO charge for attendance is made...the Union meets all costs, including return fares.. and an allowance for out-of-pocket expenses..... Mr. J.C. Taylor...held the Union's Scholarship to Ruskin College, Oxford..... There is little doubt that for the clubman who wants to make a detailed study of Club Law and Administration and Club Accountancy, participation in the Club Management Diploma correspondence course is the answer....."

Even in the narrow terms of the authors this would appear to be rational although, admittedly, the numbers of members involved in such activity may be small.

Further quoting from Coal is Our Life p.150:

"The club is a matrix of subsidiary organisations.. each of these operating within the framework of the Working Men's Club has its own formal structure of an elected committee, an income of its own, and its own lotteries.....

Two typical examples of this kind of associations are The Angling Club and the Tourist Club...

In the tourist club members are organised for the purpose of going on several minor excursions and one major tour in the course of the year.

Approximately once per month the secretary organises a trip and hires coaches for the purpose..."

Here again, even within conventional definitions of 'rational' these recreational activities, not untypical of Working Men's Clubs the country over, must be thought 'rational'.

21. GOLDTHORPE, LOCKWOOD, BECHHOFFER and PLATT: op cit; Appendix B, pp.198-199

Nature of functions	Probable composition of membership in terms of occupational status		
	Predominantly White-collar	Mixed	Predominantly Manual
Diffuse	Freemasons Conservative Clubs	Buffaloes Foresters RAF Associ'n Townswomen's Guild	Working Men's Clubs British Legion 'Sports and Social' Clubs
	Golf Clubs Flying Clubs Works Sailing Clubs	Cricket Clubs Rifle Clubs Photo' Clubs	Pigeon Clubs Angling Clubs Football Clubs Weightlifting & Bodybuilding Clubs
Inter-mediate			
Specific	Grammar School P.T.A.'s Residents' Association	Modern School P.T.A.'s Charitable Bodies Gardening Clubs	Tenants' Association Allotment Societies

22. Plotted in much sociological research of the 1950's and 1960's. Most specifically in the move from Bethnal Green to Greenleigh: Michael Young and Peter WILLMOTT op cit; and the move from Barton to St Ebbes in Oxford: J.H. MOGEY: Family and Neighbourhood, R.K.B. 1956.

23. On each of these notions see GOLDTHORPE et al; op cit; for example:

"In other words, it is indicated that the current orientation of these men towards their work was a decidedly instrumental one. p.56.

"...our findings would indicate as the most probable concomitant of these workers' orientation to work and of their present type of employment what we have earlier referred to as privatisation--a process, that is manifested in a pattern of social life which is centred on, and indeed largely restricted to, the home and the conjugal family" p.96-97.

"...in so far as coherent images of the class structure were to be found, these most often approximated 'money' models in which extrinsic differences in consumption standards, rather than relationships expressing differences in power or prestige, were represented as the basis of stratification."

24. See for example: Lewis A. COSER and Bernard ROSENBERG: Sociological Theory, Collier MacMillan 1964, Part III Ch. 9, p.309.

"The term primary group was originally defined by Charles Horton Cooley...and refers to a group characterised by intimate sympathetic face-to-face association and cooperation..."

For two or three decades after Cooley's ideas had enjoyed their first vogue, they were ignored or dismissed as hopelessly dated. What seemed to matter in the twentieth century was the phenomenal growth of secondary groups characterised by contractual rather than primary relationships.... nearly a whole generation has rediscovered a current from the past and postulate the universality and indestructibility of primary groups..."

25. For definitions and discussion of the two ideas see: David R. WEEKS: A Glossary of Sociological Concepts, The Open University Press, 1972.

"In terms of social relationships Gemeinschaft-like refers to, social relationships which entail close personal ties, many broad goals, and wide ranging commitment. Whilst Gessellschaft-like refers to social relationships which are specific, impersonal and instrumental.....
When these terms are applied to types of society:

A Gemeinschaft is a communal society in which people feel they belong because they are of the same kind....

A Gessellschaft, by contrast is an associational society in which major social bonds are voluntary, based on the rational pursuit of self interest and defined by contract...."

26. See JOHN REX: Key Problems of Sociological Theory

R.K.P. 1961 pp.129-131.

CHAPTER 2

APPROACHES TO THE
WORKING CLASS: THE 19TH CENTURY

In his article "The English Working Class" Tom Nairn makes the following observation:

"The English Working class is one of the enigmas of history. Its development is divided into two great phases. It was born into conditions of utmost violenceestranged from traditional conditions of existencethrown into the alien world of the industrial revolution. Formed by the blind energies of capitalism, its sufferings were made worse by the severest persecutionit inspired fear by its very existence...what was possible but revolt. The early history of the working class is one of revolt. And yet what became of that revolt? After 1840 it (the working class) turned into a docile class. It embraced one species of reformism after another and became a consciously subordinate part of bourgeois society, and has remained wedded to the greyest and narrowest of bourgeois ideology in its movements since." (1)

How did this defeat come about? Nairn seeks to explain this by the unique character of the English bourgeois revolution which occurred in 1640 and, unlike the French revolution, did not require an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the working class which would, as Marx suggested, have given the working class a "political and general education". Thus, as Nairn says, not only was the English working class:

"born far from socialism...but a combination of factors separated it from socialism." (2)

it is, however, necessary to look at some of the details that separated the working class from socialism, or prevented the revolution so many feared. This fear was, in many ways, a real one. A variety of movements, culminating in Chartism, indicated if not a class consciousness, at least a consciousness of a common condition, which was seen by the ruling groups as being a threat. The initial response of the "ruling class" to this was repression. For example, the Peterloo Massacre 1819, the Tolpuddle Martyrs 1833, The Poor Law Amendment Act 1834. This repression proved successful and, by 1840 with no intelligentsia and no uni-

fying philosophy and separated from access to such, the working class in England had capitulated. As Asa Briggs suggests:

"No real concessions to democracy had been made in 1832... Grey and his colleagues did little to suggest that action would be taken in the future to deal with the problems of 'distress'...by 1834 it was clear that if the plight of the suffering millions became more serious then large scale independent working class action would follow... various theories were current which set out to provide a rational basis for distinctive working class action... these were Owenism and Trade Unionism of every kind suffered serious setbacks in 1834 and 1835. As fast as workers became unionised employers retaliated by declaring war on the unions. A good example of the repression of the Trade Unions is the history of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers at Tolpuddle in Dorset founded in 1833." (3)

In addition to this aspect of the situation Briggs goes on to point out:

"In fact the 'other nation' was itself broken up...into many kinds of sub-nation. The economic, educational and temperamental gulf between skilled and unskilled workers was wide enough for J.S. MILL to see as a class divide. The skilled working class could hope for gain under the existing economic system and not likely to be revolutionary for long." (4)

Despite this independent working class action did continue in the form of friendly societies, Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies and Chartism. Friendly Societies and Co-operatives posed no threat, indeed to the extent that they enshrined the spirit of self help, they were to be encouraged and later in the century, especially in the North, the image of the working class, as Steadman-Jones suggests, was:

"of increasingly cohesive communities bound together by the chapel, the Friendly Society and the Co-op." (5)

These changes must not only be related to the use of force or independent action on the part of the working class; the role of ideas must also be examined, especially the ideas of the middle class, and the ways in which these ideas were inculcated into the working class. In this connection it is worth looking at the 'moral revolution' which accomp-

anied the industrial revolution. Harold Perkin says of this:

"the English ceased to be one of the most aggressive, brutal, rowdy, outspoken, riotous, cruel, bloodthirsty nations...and became one of the most inhibited, polite, orderly, tender-minded, prudish and hypocritical...the explanation of this new morality was the imposition on the whole society, especially on its upper and lower levels, the traditional puritanism of the English middle ranks." (6)

The conversion of the working class to this new morality and the associated 'entrepreneurial ideal' took some time and the conversion was not straight forward. The fact that it was beginning to win even as early as the 1830's is implied by Briggs in the above quotation, which suggests that even then some workers saw themselves as benefitting from the economic order. How real this benefit was is debatable, what is important is that some groups of workers should perceive it to be so. Perkin says:

"despite the working classes own efforts (at propaganda and education) the middle class set about providing their own alternatives - once again direct attack failed but infiltration succeeded." (7)

Perkin goes on to suggest that amongst a number of ways in which this conversion was achieved, education was certainly one, and in particular the mechanics institute.

The first 'Mechanical Institution' was founded in London in 1817 by a mechanic, Timothy Claxton, and lasted three years. The idea was revived in 1823 by Thomas Hodgskin and J.C. Robertson, editor of the mechanics' magazine.

They were supported by a group of 'working mechanics', tradesmen and radical reformers. They made the mistake of approaching Francis Place (8), and the Benthamites took over. Institutions managed by working men in Glasgow 1823, Bradford 1825, Manchester 1829 failed, while those under

middle class influence and support went from strength to strength. From 55 in 1831 with 7,000 members, they grew to 1,200 by 1860 with 20,000.

The institutions, were self conscious disseminators of the entrepreneurial ideal. Lectures on practical science for industrial application, on the truths of political economy such as, the Ricardian Law of Wages, Malthusian Population theory, the benefits of machinery and the lives of successful inventors and business men. Brougham (later to be involved in the Working Men's Club Movement) said in his opening address that the institutes were a vehicle of social climbing. The Bradford institute reformed in 1832 under middle class control looked back in 1859 on "an unbroken stream of sons of working men, rising to positions of responsibility which they would never have filled without its aid." (9)

Certainly their members tended to prosper and join the middle class. As Perkin comments:

"...to the extent that they diverted a considerable number of energetic and intelligent working men into the paths of social ambition who might otherwise have turned to working class protest, they had admirably served their purpose." (10)

It is at this point that the Working Men's Club comes onto the scene. But before examining the specific history of these it is worth noting a few other points about the 19th century ideology that were of some relevance to the club movement.

One of these influences is the domination of thought from 1820-1870 by classical economic theory. In the introduction to "Outcast London" Gareth Steadman-Jones says:

"In the period 1820-1870 the political and economic though was overshadowed by Ricardian economics. The main aspects of this system are: Malthusian economic theory; Labour or cost of production theory of value; wages fund theory; Ricardian theory of rent; the whole thing being held together by hedonistic psychological theory of human action." (11)

Thinkers such as Malthus, Ricardo, Mill and Senior saw human progress in very narrow terms, at worst deterioration at best a move to a stationary state. These negative attitudes to progress were reflected in attitudes to the working class. The early political economists were pessimistic; working class advance was limited. For Mill the only prospect for the working class was how far by education they could be made into rational beings. As late as 1874 J.E. Cairns could write:

"the margin for the possible improvement of their lot is confined within the narrow barriers which cannot be passed and the problem of their elevation is hopeless. As a body they will not raise at all." (12)

Alongside this view must be placed that of Bentham:

"a single mistake in extending equality too far may overthrow the social order and dissolve the bonds of society. Equality may require such a distribution of property as to be incompatible with security...Equality should not be favoured, except when it does not affect security, nor disturb a distribution already settled." (13)

With a dim view of human progress and a negative attitude to equality the 19th century faced early the contradiction between preaching the entrepreneurial ideal and the merits of self help and the obvious fact that relatively few could directly benefit. Thus it became necessary to inculcate the values for their own sake and without the promise of better things to come. It was in resolution of this contradiction that the Working Men's Club movement emerged. They were to be places in which the working class was to be contained, controlled and educated. On the point of control and containment, and since the original conception

of the clubs entailed the notion that 'gentlemen' were to mix with the workers a number of further points are worth noting.

Arising out of the agitation about the second reform bill and a variety of 'riots' in London the middle class were increasingly concerned with the threat of insurrection and revolt. Solly, the founder of the C.I.U., expresses it thus:

"What could a force of 8,000 police be against the 150,000 ruffians whom, on some sufficiently exciting occasion, the Metropolis may see arrayed against the forces of law and order...how different a London mob is from a docile peasantry or orderly Lancashire operatives...we must not conceal from ourselves the possibility of Londoners having to live from time to time under the protection and rule of the military."
(14)

The main cause of this threat, the dislocation of the industrial and economic background, the collapse of staple industries, the expansion of casual trades, overcrowding and poverty were ignored. As the vicar of Stepney wrote:

"It is not so much that poverty is increasing as pauperism, the want of thrift and industry and self reliance ...some half a million people have been flung into the crucible of benevolence and come out simple paupers."
(15)

Here is expressed what was seen as the true cause of the problem; the indiscriminate operation of public and private charity which led directly to the demoralisation of the workers.

The antidote to the problem was work; charity sapped the will to work. Thus the indiscriminate alms-giver was the cause of the social ills of the City and the threat posed by the working class. However, the 'alms-giver' was only a symptom of a much deeper malaise. This was the immense geographical gulf which had grown between the rich and the poor. Concern had been expressed about this almost

from the beginning of the industrial revolution, but in the 1850's and 1860's the process had, especially in London, become almost complete. The consequences of this separation of the classes were seen as poor administration in the poor areas and an upset in the balance between private charity and the Poor Law. This last was especially important in conjunction with a third consequence, of the 'demoralisation' of the working classes. At the lowest level the separation of the classes led to a breakdown of social relationships and traditional modes of social control. This point is made clear by an analysis of the nature of the charitable gift. Inherent in the act of giving are three features:

the gift normally involves an idea of sacrifice

gifts are seen as symbols of prestige

the gift serves as a method of social control. To give places an obligation on the receiver...in order to receive one must behave in an acceptable manner, if only by expressing gratitude and humility. (16)

The gift thus expresses a relationship between two people.

If it is depersonalised it loses its defining features:

the elements of voluntary sacrifice, prestige, subordination and obligation. In London the gift no longer implied the gift that would lead the poor back to the path of virtue, instead the gift relationship had been replaced by indiscriminate alms-giving; the relationship between people had disappeared and with it the elements of social control. The solution to the problem lay in once again putting the rich and the poor in contact with each other. The C.O.S. and their elaborate methods of investigation and classification stressed the importance of the element of obligation in the gift. It was also stressed the 'bodily aid' was

not enough, as Dennison wrote:

"I am beginning seriously to believe that all bodily aid to the poor is a mistake and that the real thing is to let things work themselves straight; whereas by giving alms they are kept crooked instead of providing teachers, prizes and working men's clubs, help them to help themselves, lend them your brains...give them something more than money." (17)

As Steadman-Jones says:

"new forms of guidance would have to be devised if adherence to the virtues of labour, thrift and self help were to be restored...the poor were to be led back to manliness and independence under the firm but benevolent aegis of a new urban squirearchy." (18)

One such form of guidance was to be the working men's clubs, one such urban squire was, for a short while, to be the Reverend Henry Solly.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Tom NAIRN: The English Working Class, Chapter 9, pp.187-206 in: Ideology in Social Science (ed) Robin BLACKBURN, Fontana 1972.
2. ibid; p.192.
3. Asa BRIGGS: The Age of Improvement, Longmans, 1967, p. 286.
4. ibid; p.301
5. Gareth STEADMAN JONES: Outcast London, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971, p.10.
6. Harold PERKIN: The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880, R.K.P., 1972, p.280.
7. Harold PERKIN: op cit; p.305.
8. One more example of that curious Victorian product the converted worker. See Mary THALE (ed): The Autobiography of Francis Place,

"...the curious confluence in Place of Benthamite theory, working-class militancy, and what we would identify as middle-class self-help attitudes and belief in constitutional reform...he appears to be more nearly a middle-class reformer than a working-class radical...a self made man...with a sense of his own virtue, the sense that a man who is dilligent and patient may succeed, rise...as opposed to the man who proposes that the structure of society needs to be changed..."
9. Harold PERKIN: op cit; p.306.
10. Harold PERKIN: op cit; p.306. However, for a much more cogent appraisal of the mechanics institutes as important agents of social control see: Steven SHAPIN and Barry BARNES: Science, Nature and Control: interpreting Mechanics' Institutes. Chapter 5, pp.55-65 in: Schooling and Capitalism: Roger DALE, Geoff ESLAND and Madeleine MacDONALD, the Open University, 1976. The suggestion here is:

"...the founders of British Mechanics' Institutes thought a scientific education would aid in the social control of those artisans who were their designated target...a regimen of scientific education for certain members of the working class would render them, and their class as a whole, more docile, less troublesome, and more accepting of the emerging structure of industrial society."

The target for the proposed education programme was not the working class as a whole but for certain sub-groups within it who were thought to possess 'known' attributes: economic, social, moral and intellectual. The thought of the lower orders was characterised as:

"...fragmented and governed by transient impressions, their perceived immorality, insolence sensuality and political volatility could thus be 'explained'. As they grasped no abstract moral and intellectual, they were at the mercy of whatever passing desire, whim or fancy...they had no stable moral and intellectual framework to evaluate actions...."

Science was to have a special part to play in correcting this state of affairs and imposing order and rationality on the lower class mind:

"...the study of the natural world would point out laws, relationships and the presence of design of which the worker would otherwise be unaware, he would perceive (metaphorically or directly) the rational organisation of society, also, in its harmonious relationship with the natural world."

Thus backed by theology a natural and SOCIAL order was presented which was immutable and irrefutable. To question it was both irrational and sinful.

11. Gareth STEADMAN JONES: op cit; p.1.

12. ibid; p.4.

13. ibid.

14. ibid; p.243.

15. ibid; p.244.

16. ibid; p.251-252.

17. ibid; p.259.

18. ibid; p.261.

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CHAPTER 3

THE GROWTH OF THE
WORKING MEN'S CLUB MOVEMENT

The Working Men's Club Movement and its co-ordinating body, the Club and Institute Union, traces its origin to a meeting held at the Law Amendment Societies Rooms, Waterloo Place, London in 1826. Its founder was the Reverend Henry Solly, a Unitarian minister. The principle that guided him was of doing something about 'reclaimed drunkards' and he observed:

"Notwithstanding all the efforts made to improve the character and condition of the working classes in this country, intemperence, ignorance, improvidence and religious indifference still abound among them to a deplorable extent."

However, the history of the Working Men's Club movement enjoys an undistinguished career. Few historical accounts, even of working-class movements, carry any mention of them. Apart from the odd acknowledgement that they existed, Working Men's Clubs have arrived in the 20th century almost unobserved. This neglect by historians is paralleled in sociology. Few books mention them, once again not even those dealing with aspects of working-class life. Those which carry some recognition of this important working class institution do so in a superficial and often romantic manner. Little attempt at real analysis seems to have been made. (1) A later section will look more closely at some of the sociological characteristics of the clubs. This section seeks to examine the historical growth of the clubs and to set this in some sort of context.

No claim to originality is made. Sources here are essentially secondary. In particular the work commissioned by the Club and Institute Union to celebrate its first hundred years, by George TREMLETT (2), and an account by the founder of the Club and Institute Union and moving spirit in the early growth of clubs, Rev. Henry SOLLY (3).

Additionally I am indebted to the work of John TAYLOR (4) whose construction of the growth of the Working Men's Club movement based on primary sources is a most comprehensive account.

Solly's account is a classic of Victorian concern with 'improving' the working class. The books by TREMLETT and TAYLOR represent two quite different types of historiography. TREMLETT's book is in the 'look at our great trek' genre of labour history. Illustrated by the sub-title: 'The Exciting Saga'. In the main it is an account of the C.I.U. based on the personalities associated with the movement and deal little with clubs themselves. It is an unexciting account which makes the clubs sound like a long committee meeting. In the main the tone is deferential, the attitudes of many of his subjects have a habit of creeping into his historiography. It lacks any real framework or perspective. TAYLOR's book is much more 'informed' and uses original sources to build up a convincing picture of the clubs in their growth and maturity. He is chiefly concerned to show how the aims of the founders were gradually replaced by the aims of the working class which were markedly different. The main weakness of the account is that it lacks any real perspective, other than a wry tilt at the founder whose temperance based patronage was confounded when the working class took over the running of the clubs. There is little attempt to relate the history of the clubs to 19th century ideology. Or to explain those forces which bind the clubs in the present to the clubs in the past. Using material drawn from these sources the purpose of this section is to first outline the history of the clubs and to trace some of the significant changes which seem

to be relevant to an understanding of the clubs in the present. I will then look more closely at the way in which the clubs were one of a number of means by which the English bourgeoisie attempted to inculcate the values of self help, entrepreneurial ideal and the protestant ethic into the working class when early attempts at working class political activity had been suppressed. By using the self-help principle and patronage to help the working class to found clubs: early to have an educative function, later to emphasise entertainment. In this began the process of creating a working class at once both non-revolutionary, and gradually to be 'civically' (5) incorporated into the capitalist state; and yet developing in a separate milieu a distinctive culture, way of life and institutions. Of which, despite their origins as tools of bourgeoisification, the working men's club was to become both an expression and dimension.

As has been suggested the Working Men's Club movement owes its inception to the activities of the Reverend Henry SOLLY who, after much thought and even more activity, saw what he thought to be the real need of the working classes in mid-Victorian England.

Henry Solly was born in London at the end of the 18th century of puritan background and English. He was obviously 'middle class' since his father "worthily maintained the commercial traditions of the family", and was "first chairman of London and North Western Railway Company". Solly spent his early years in Walthamstow where his grandfather had erected a meeting house in 1730. The Reverend Eleizer Cogan, a preacher at the meeting house, was Solly's first teacher. He later studied at a Unitarian school at Hove. In 1829 he went to London University where

he did classical and mathematical studies. However, his father wanted him in commerce and he left to enter a ship brokers' office. In 1840 he became a Unitarian minister. He spent the next 22 years as a minister and during this time moved about the country a great deal and was interested throughout in providing activities for the working man after work.

Solly himself gives an account of what he sees as the background to the club movement.

"In tracing the origins of the recent movement in favour of Working Men's Clubs, we must look back forty years to the agitation on behalf of the Mechanics Institutesthen came various unconnected attempts to provide... reading rooms...then came the Mutual Improvement societies. (6)

(Solly had been connected with one of these in Yeovil in the 1840's.)

"which aimed at the preparation of papers on interesting and improving topics...these societies were seldom long lived. In 1842 the peoples college was founded in Sheffield....then came the greatest impulse to the movement of elevating working men on the social scale, we mean the establishment in 1854 by the Reverend F.D. Maurice of the Working Men's College. He came to the working class, suffering as they do from inadequate early education and deadening toil and said: 'we want you to help one another...for this purpose we must have...mutual social sympathies, regular and earnest educational effort, Bible classes, gymnasia, library, coffee rooms, occasional lectures, soirees and so forther.'" (7)

He goes on to give a number of further examples which illustrate the move to institutions emphasising relaxation; one in Salford which made:

"intercourse, amusement and refreshment the primary object" (8)

and he says:

"about this time the writer, who had for twenty years been trying in various parts of the country to promote mechanics institutes, was coming to the conclusion that a much larger provision for social intercourse than these institutions afforded was required to meet the needs of the working man." (9)

Solly was also, during the time he was trying to 'educate' the working man, trying to keep him sober and when a lady observed to him: 'what are we to do with our reclaimed drunkards?' he had a new vision of the

"work to be done in our industrial cities" (10)

All the efforts before, he now saw, had ignored the simplest and most urgent need of the working man; a place for:

"unrestrained social intercourse, the means of chatting with each other with or without refreshments" (11)

The refreshments were without question to be of a sober kind and the intercourse was to be educative:

"Education must go hand in hand with temperance if we are to have a real and permanent improvement" (12)

His view of the problem he had to face tells a lot about the initial conception of the movement:

"The desire for social enjoyment and the love of entertainment are the impulses that habitually drive the working classes to the Beer Shop. Music, also, which ought to purify and refine, is now extensively employed as a temptation to drinking and other vices. Until there can be established in every locality an institution that shall meet these instincts with superior attractions, but without the temptation to evil, it is unreasonable to expect a diminution in the drinking customs of the working population. This want the proposed clubs will supply." (13)

Thus, with clubs, half-hearted Mechanics Institutes, Solly proposed to save the working class from drink, the devil and insurrection. Also, at the same time, to educate them. That the clubs were to be more than just a haven from sin, with tea and sandwiches, is reflected in the 'Reasons' given for supporting the society in an appeal issued by the C.I.U. to people who it was thought might be willing to support the movement, both financially and morally.

"we do not desire to extenuate the errors of working men, or to be blind to the fact that they have recently gained, in many cases, concessions of various kinds... but...there is no doubt that the working classes alike both physically and politically, are now very important to the state...and full of grave responsibility for the future of this country...yet these men have been left for generations to the influence of the beer shop and public house...it would be unreasonable to expect the great bulk of working men to give up the public house and establish private clubs without some impulse and guidance from those above them...it is in the interests of employers as much as workmen...to promote habits of sobriety and a disposition towards reasonable and intelligent considerations of all questions affecting labour and capital. The future prosperity of this country, and the stability of its institutions depends on the morality and intelligence of its artisans...it would be difficult to exaggerate their (the clubs) pecuniary, moral or educational value...through their influence in checking intemperance, promoting education, refinement and provident habits, and fostering a good understanding between employers and employed." (14)

This quotation tells a lot. Gone are the narrow goals of curbing drink with a bit of education thrown in. Here is laid out a wider set of interests. The working class were now important both "physically" and "politically". This was the time when a second wave of working class activism broke out and it was even more imperative that they should be encouraged in middle class virtues of thrift, sobriety and reasonable habits. This the clubs would set out to do. When the conversion is secured all would benefit: the employers, the prosperity of the country and the stability of the institutions. All this was to be achieved by guidance from above.

Solly was successful in persuading a variety of people to support the movement. Lord Brougham became president: the 33 vice presidents included five peers: four MP's: the Deans of Carlisle, Chichester, Ely: donations came from Gladstone, Chamberlain and the Prince of Wales.

This spirit of patronage spread to the provinces and

locally the clubs were founded by, and overlooked by, the local representatives of the middle class, especially Reverends of one kind or another.

The influence of patrons continued throughout the 1860's and 1870's. Not only was this influence felt financially - in the first years the income from subscriptions from associate members was exceeded by subscriptions - but more especially in the running of the clubs. Solly himself exerted much influence; his was the dead hand of paternalism, despite his desire to let working men help themselves he had strong ideas about what they should help themselves to. In the main, to submit to the very worst, dehumanising patronage:

"a gentleman who, in a thoroughly unassuming manner with a kindly heart drops in as a guest...can often set the talk going in a very pleasant natural way" (15)

there follows some instructions as how this can be done and then he says:

"if a gentleman has a microscope or telescope and wishes to help working men to know something of the wonders of creation in a drop of water...and if a lady has a number of beautiful drawings and wishes to show them to the working man and his wife, so that their hearts may be gladdened and purified." (16)

To give up beer and smoking, to be educated for their station and to understand the joy of revealed religion. All this was to make its own contribution to containing the working class. Not only was the interpenetration of the working class by their betters good because of the 'refining' powers of 'cultured' persons, but they were a constant reminder to the lower orders from whence came their aid. Thus, allowing for some cohesion and organic solidarity between the rulers and the ruled. This in its turn made revolt less likely.

Growth in the early years was sporadic. Clubs sprang up and sooner or later declined, but by the latter part of the 1860's there were about 280-300 clubs in Britain. Around this time too there were some straws in the wind that suggested that all was not well and that the Solly image of one big family was far from the reality in many cases. In trying to explain the decline of many of the clubs the C.I.U. gives some clue as to the state of affairs. They attribute the decline of many clubs to one or more of eight causes:

1. Absence of beer
2. Presence of youths
3. Absence of resident gentry
4. "Too positive presence of the Parson's hand"
5. "Gentlemen who guaranteed became tired of cost, disheartened from expecting completely successful results prematurely"
6. "The present political agitation" - 1867
7. The present strained relations between master and man.
8. In the metropolis...the number of rival attractions.(17)

All was not well. And to this list may be added the comment of Tremlett:

"Solly was the propellor and the brake of the new movement: he got it going, but his objectives were typically those of a Victorian Parson. He could not conceive that a club and an educational institution had completely different functions. His reluctance to countenance the sale of beer, his diatribes against smoking show how great was the gulf between him and the working people..."
(18)

Solly was doubtless not the only one.

The beer question was vital. Some concessions were made in 1864 when the absolute ban on drink was lifted but they still recommended on prudential grounds that beer be not introduced:

"the reasonableness of which, it is believed, the working classes will be the first to acknowledge."
(19)

By 1867 the rules on beer were relaxed further; beer was permissible in moderation...the enemy was the pub and the problem was to control drinking. At the local level the relaxation on the consumption of beer was also evident and by 1870 most clubs were willing to allow beer, albeit under control, and in some cases with restrictions on how much could be drunk.

This relaxation of the drinking rules probably had the most profound effect on the future development of the clubs.

Other signs that all was not well are not easy to miss.

As far back as 1865 George Howell (20), a bricklayer member of the committee, had complained "of the patronising spirit which was too much shown towards the working class". (21)

At this time too, the London clubs were beginning to admit members of other union clubs...the men were perhaps beginning to please themselves.

Another sign of the unrest in the clubs comes from Wednesbury Club, which had been founded in 1863. The distinctive feature of this club is that it is one of the first to be started by working men alone, not plagued by their betters and their characteristic patronage. Solly says of this club:

"it has special claims upon attention from its having originated and almost exclusively supported by working men" (22)

This was admirable: the spirit of self help at large. But, in 1865, a strike in the local ironworks led the club to offer its hospitality to the locked out puddlers and iron worker. This was not so good. Here the spirit of self interest runs counter to the employing class, and the men

using their institution as they see fit. It illustrates once more that the working men were beginning to please themselves.

By the early 1870's the revolt against patronage was well under way, reflected in the growth of clubs wholly supported by working men and recognised by both the club journal and the speech by Lord Rosebery when he became president of the C.I.U. in 1875. The journal said in 1872:

"the council especially rejoice at the fact that so many applications come from working men; and that these latter are more and more anxious to dispense with pecuniary aid from other classes"

Rosebery said:

"The principle upon which the Working Men's Club and Institute Union is based is that the working men are to be raised by their own endeavours, and are not to be patronised and fostered and dandled. All that is to be done for working men is to be done by themselves.... if they (the clubs) are to be a great success they are to be self supporting" (23)

It seems from this that the people who had patronised the clubs were beginning to recognise the spirit of emancipation and to a great degree welcome it, although Rosebery was careful to suggest that:

"they ought to set before their members some object higher than mere social objective" (24)

The club members had other ideas and there emerged, with the decrease in patronage, a new type of club man and a new type of club. For the next twenty years the clubs were to provide both entertainment, in the broadest sense, and also a political forum. This latter was to give way to the former, but at this stage both these trends have to be traced.

The view of the early promoters of the C.I.U. on entertainment was an anxious one. Presumably they saw the club

becoming another Public House and their response was cautious, and their encouragement related to moral, intellectual and cultural goals:

"We believe both dancing and dramatic entertainment in themselves to be innocent, rational and often improving, when wisely and properly conducted, the former being useful both physically and as an artistic and refined enjoyment, while dramatic exhibitions may promote moral and intellectual culture in a very high degree." (25)

Thus encouragement was limited and the entertainment provided in the early clubs was chosen to blend with the ideals of the movement's overseers. In the beginning the "Penny Reading" dominated the proceedings:

"Harting Club had: 'a good Penny Reading' all the better because the programme was varied and the speakers limited to ten minutes apiece." (26)

In the next twenty years the nature of the entertainment changed. But for some time the spirit of the 'Penny Reading' lived on:

"Mr. H. Valentine took the chair, and the following ladies and gentlemen provided an enjoyable evening for the audience. Mr. Cooper opened with "The Pretty Girls from London", Mr. Smith sang "The Midshipmate" and "Many a Night", Mrs. Goullee recited "Sicilian Tales" by Longfellow etc. etc. etc." (27)

However this type of entertainment was giving way to the

'Free and Easy' and the club concert. Taylor says of these:

"Club concerts, which developed rapidly in the 1870's and 1880's (especially in the London clubs), were closer in spirit to the music hall than the drawing room ballad: 'When the winkle goes by', 'The Flea that Bit Poor Nora'...While other songs reflected sentiments directly related to the emergent labour movement: 'Co-operative Craze', 'We've Worked Eight Hours Today'." (28)

The flavour and general character of the Music Halls is imparted by this extract quoted in Taylor:

"The performance begins. The chairman bangs the table with a little hammer, and announces that Mr. So-and-So will now oblige with such-and-such. A flourish is given on the piano and a boyish looking young man steps upon the stage...." (29)

Another favourite pastime was the 'Judge and Jury Classes'; a mock trial during which members of the club were tried for a variety of offences. These were an example of the members entertaining themselves since all the participants were drawn from the club. These trials were criticised by some:- "...pernicious and nasty institutions" was the comment of one of Booth's informers, dealing with "Affiliation cases and other filth". (30) However these were popular and served as vehicles for political propaganda or the airing of sources of conflict within the club. For some thirty years (1875-1905) dramatic performances were a part of club life; Shakespeare and socialism happily co-existed with brass bands and debates. In this era the clubs provided a wide variety of entertainment, especially dramatic performances, provided by bands of amateurs, often originating from the elocution classes. The performances took in not only Shakespeare but also melodramas and short sketches, often written by clubmen, and with a lot of audience participation. These performances attracted large numbers; of these plays Taylor says:

"Certainly these melodramas were marked with an economy of plot and polarisation of situation and interest, but these very same elements obtained in the day-to-day life of club audiences." (31)

During this time too, music in the form of brass bands was not neglected, and many clubs had string bands and choirs or Glee clubs. These musicians often contributed to the dances which were also a popular part of the club life.

In addition to these forms of entertainment debates on topical issues, often with political implications.

Entertainment was beginning to win but, perhaps inevitably, the clubs went through a political stage in the last quarter of the 19th century. There is no doubt that politics was

furthest from the minds of the founders:

"It is universally recognised and most important...that this Union...must be rigidly kept free from political bias...and scrupulously avoid becoming...organisation for promoting political purposes." (32)

A later version of this injunction (1876) reads:

"Political questions which involve the personal merits of individuals and mere party squabbles should be avoided..." (33)

However despite this view the club members were politically aware and a number of clubs became associated with the radical cause; some of the clubs openly supported political platforms. Amongst the issues that members concerned themselves with were; manhood suffrage, women's suffrage, abolition of the House of Lords, expense of elections to be on consolidated funds or rates, free and higher education for the masses. This political interest must stem in large measure from the new independence of the clubs.

Stimulated by their emancipation in which the clubs became self governing, self expressing and increasingly class conscious, the clubs attacked much of the Victorian establishment - The Church of England, the Monarchy, the Tory Party. As far as the issue of Capital and Labour was concerned, many of the clubs took definite sides. The politics of the clubs was not just a few slogans but was linked to political education. Clubs regularly engaged lecturers to speak on the topics of the day. The politics was also in many cases active. In 1876 the Hackney Club held a crowded public meeting to protest about the Tory government's support of "the atrocious barbarities of the Turks in Bulgaria". This period also saw the growth of Political Clubs in many parts of the country which were involved in local activity. The Oldham Radical Club was:

"One of our more active clubs, which is now, amongst other things, taking a very active part in the municipal elections." (34)

The Club and Institute Union annual report for 1881-82

bemoans the fact:

"that large numbers of artisans are attracted to political clubs, while others frequent mechanics institutes. Thus the social clubs are left too exclusively in the hands of those who care little for anything beyond such amusements as billiards." (35)

Other sources of criticism of the political leaning of the clubs are not hard to find. One of Booth's reporters suggests that the clubs were far more influential than religion, that many members set a thoroughly bad tone and spent their Sundays in a nasty and degrading manner:

"He goes to the club in the morning with a pot in front of him, and froths at the mouth over all sorts of socialistic rot" (36)

The clubs, now more public and active, were also seen as anti-religious:

"Infidelity is still active in some quarters, especially in connection with the Working Men's Clubs, which are a fruitful source of evil in many neighbourhoods... there seems...no remedy to this evil except the more persistent preaching of the gospel..." (37)

Republicanism was also strongly supported in many clubs and many 'digs' at the Monarchy were made by club speakers. London clubmen were especially to be found in political demonstrations in the 1880's. They for example organised the march on "Bloody Sunday" in 1887. These demonstrations were often accompanied by brass bands and banners. Many of these demonstrations were dealt with by the police in a manner not too different from today:

"it was then noticable that a strong body of foot and mounted police...refused to let them proceed further... the procession pushed forward only to be driven back by the blows from the batons...after a severe tussle the police wantonly charged the inoffensive bystanders who stood about the pavement." (38)

Of the same incident another club reports:

"we were charged by the police, brutally maltreated... maimed and wounded. Our banner was torn from us and the bearers truncheoned in a most merciless manner"
(39)

For a while this political activism was a long way from the C.I.U. policy. But not for long. The emergence of other political agencies took the steam out of the clubs as political educators or protagonists. The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 as was the Social Democratic Federation. In 1893 the Independent Labour Party emerged. The growing strength of the Trade Union movement led finally to the Labour Party in 1906. All these provided better platforms for the politically minded clubmen. This movement was also accompanied by the political parties themselves either establishing their own clubs, especially the Conservatives, or already existing clubs being assimilated into the Party machines, as is the case of the Liberal and Labour parties. Here were not only potential working class votes but also workers. These moves marked the decline of club politics. By the 1890's the clubs were:

"regarded as a team of workhorses harnessed to the party machines. The clubs were no longer in the vanguard of political activity, they brought up the rear...relegated to routine tasks at election times...the old breed of intellectual clubman had no place in this procession of neutered policies and prescriptions; they were relegated to the role of the willing and obedient servants."
(40)

This early thrust of political activity and interest then gave way under the impact of counter political attractions and outlets. What was left? Certainly not education. Developments outside in education gradually took this function away; from Fosters Education Act in 1870 to the foundation of the Workers' Educational Association in 1903. Entertainment was left and entertainment triumphed.

The decline in the educative and political function was paralleled by the gradual rise in the number of clubs and their consolidation as part of working class life. They became part of the community and part of the culture. The transition from a more serious intention to one in which entertainment was most important was gradual. Lighter entertainment was introduced and there was an extension of sport and a variety of less "demanding" pastimes. The club became a place to while away the time in fairly undemanding ways. They became social and passive - insulated from the wider world.

This phase of club life has never faltered. It continues and goes from strength to strength. Entertainment, often on a lavish scale, reflects the developments in the world of Show Business. The emphasis is on relaxation. The battles of the outside world are not fought here.

It is now generally agreed by many social historians that much 19th century social reform was less a response to charitable or philanthropic emotions than to the 'threat' of an increasingly organised and articulate working class. It became more obvious as the 19th century progressed that large numbers of people could neither remain on the margins of poverty without some form of protest, nor be 'controlled' by coercive means for any length of time. Optimistic about the long term benefits of a quiescent working class and confident that given the opportunity most of the working class, especially the superior artisan, would understand the superiority of middle class values and ways of life; the middle class set about casting the working class in their own image. Thus, things held dear by respectable society would no longer be threatened. So much

is agreed. What however, were the exact processes involved in such attempts to impose 'safe' and 'alien' ideologies on the working class? One such has been the subject of the foregoing account: the Working Men's Club.

Before proceeding it is necessary to draw together the argument so far. In the 1850's and 1860's it had become evident that attempts to inculcate 'useful' or 'pure' knowledge or pass on 'scientific' education had in large measure failed. Mechanics Institutes, the forerunners of Working Men's Clubs, it was suggested, had had an important role in attempting to persuade the 'superior' working man that the order and certainty in nature, ordained by God, was paralleled in social organisation. The real task, it was hoped they would understand, was not to question this God-given order but to accept, and patiently elucidate God's immutable plan in order to come to terms with it. However, these Institutes had failed to attract, in any numbers, the type of working man who, it was hoped would carry the 'right' ideas to those lower down the scale. It is possible that many working men were diverted from revolutionary activity, but the problem, arising in part from the middle class take over of Mechanics Institutes, was the numbers. Since so few were involved other means of securing social obedience needed to be found. At this point a change of emphasis may be observed. Away, that is, from specific goals of knowledge as such to more diffuse notions of 'gentling' 'raising' 'civilising' 'elevating' the working class. In order to do this more working men needed to be drawn within reach of the agencies of improvement. It was therefore reluctantly accepted that in addition to

'educational' facilities for relaxation and amusement must be provided. Thus the definition of education was to be widened and the origins of the Working Men's Club movement lie in the working out of this new conception. Early clubs, based on this new idea but still moralistic in approach and fatally, in most cases, prohibiting alcohol, foundered. It was not until the initiative of Henry SOLLY, who founded the Club and Institute Union, in 1862, with the aim of developing existing clubs and creating new ones that the movement got under way. Aware of the failure of many other middle-class reform attempts, Solly placed emphasis on the recreational and social basis of institutions for the reform and evaluation of the working class. Despite this departure from previous efforts his vision was still narrow.

Solly shared with others like him the idea that working men were in a lower state of nature. Their primary need was to be shown that they possessed higher faculties and had a duty to recognise and use them. This was to be achieved not by bombarding them with formal education and Christian morality, though neither was ever to be far away. They must first be attracted away from the pub, and its attendant evils, by the provision of recreational facilities, albeit more restrained, which would be the starting point for more significant programmes of education. As they developed the clubs were social rather than learning institutions. This proceeded from the recognition that, despite the overriding importance of education, nothing would be achieved unless the character of improving institutions reflected what working men wanted and not what middle class men thought they wanted. While this was open to the

criticism that the 'improving' function would be lost, the aim was to build a foundation of responsible fellowship upon which worthier things could be erected. Working Men's Clubs were successful. And, from the beginning they were working class. They had no appeal, unlike the Mechanics Institutes, to the aspiring lower middle class. They were, in many respects, the most successful, certainly the most enduring, of the many Victorian social reform agencies. They seem to have combined, despite, as later history indicates, a good deal of tension, middle class reform aims with working class needs. For at least the first twenty years they were a movement for the working class accepted by the working class. Largely their initial success stems from the fact that they provided for the working class community. Bars, lounges, games rooms, emerged as a result of the Working Men's Clubs. Although much of what went on in the clubs was viewed with apprehension by many of the middle classes it was the price to be paid for being able to present the working class, in increasing numbers programmes of improvement.

Three important aspects of the club movement illustrate the tension between their connection with 19th century reform ideology and their use by the working class to meet needs which arose from their own experience. These are: the debate over the introduction of alcohol; the questions of patronage and control; and the expressed class conciliation objectives of the founders and leaders. Drink was to many 19th century social reformers the main problem to be solved. And, though some hint that environment may be in part responsible, the real source of the problem was the moral failing of the working class; in

brief the working man were not able to resist the temptations of liquor. Given this view it is not difficult to understand the prohibition on alcohol imposed by early patrons on the clubs. How else were the wider goals to be achieved? However, this prohibition was the source of tension and crisis. Many men were discouraged from joining clubs because of the teetotalism thus putting themselves beyond the scope of improvement. However, working men insisted that alcoholic drink must be available, and pressed the matter. Compromise on both sides was the result. Working men had to prove that the dangers of alcohol were slight and that they could act 'responsibly'. This middle class founders had to recognise that if the movement was to be in the least way successful alcohol must be sold. Finally the victory of alcohol was put to good use. Clubs could now be presented as real alternatives to pubs. Virtue was made of necessity. Proof of the success of the clubs was that now, despite the temptations of alcohol, working men would act responsibly for the good name of the club.

In the early days, since financial assistance was necessary, middle class patronage was essential. Not only were men of influence required to provide money, it was thought that they were necessary for their organising ability, knowledge of committee work and business affairs. Whatever the means, which differed from place-to-place, the control over the clubs - times of opening, prices, activities - was exercised by those who put up the money. Thus, anything which did not meet with the approval of the patrons could be prevented. Quickly this became a problem and a source of tension. In the 1870's and early 1880's priority was, in many clubs,

given to paying off loans and soliciting no further financial aid. Gradually clubs were founded without outside help. This was at the local level. The Club and Institute Union continued, for some time, to reflect the background of patrons and subscribers either middle class or aristocratic. The council of the Union was predominantly self appointed members of the leisured class.

Continued pressure from club members illustrates the rejection of patronage and the conscious desire of working men to run their own clubs. Fighting such proposals the patronising classes attempted to discredit them as being class based. Which they were, and the idea had little effect on working men's desire to control their own affairs. Additionally it was proposed that most club members were ill equipped to assume responsibility for the movement. A variety of palliatives were proposed, mainly involving the idea that the root of the problem was poor communication which should be improved, all of which missed the essential point: working men wanted control of their clubs from the middle class. In many cases individual clubs had thrown off their patrons; it was now necessary that the Union, the embodiment of the purposes, objectives and direction of the clubs should do the same. The central idea behind the inception of the clubs, that middle class guidance was necessary to achieve moral and social improvement, must, it was considered, be rejected.

By 1884 the change had been accomplished after much haggling at a number of conferences in the previous year. Patrons left, membership increased and the Union became both financially solvent and a true working-class organisation.

There is little doubt that class conciliation was an important aspect of the founding philosophy of the Working Men's Club movement. If working men were to be persuaded of the justice of present social and economic arrangements and thereby mitigate challenges to the social order and secure social stability, means must be found to achieve this. Early reforms had only been partially successful. Working Men's Clubs took on the work. Contact between the classes, increasingly separated both physically and socially with the progress of industrialisation, would blunt the edge of class sentiments, through association and friendship. A theme to be explored through most of the 19th and early 20th century in literature, survey and social reform ideology. Working Men's Clubs were developed before the Labour Party and the trade union movement took the sting out of working class protest. The fear that, at worst there would be a bloody revolution, or, little better, a drunken, uneducated working class would, by some natural means, take over the centres of power, had to be challenged. There emerged from attempts to avert such a disaster one of the most successful reforming institutions which, in its consciously designated role as an agency of social control, although neither charitable nor philanthropic, employed a number of techniques to achieve its ends. Some were crass. The prohibition on drink for example. However, the overall 'plan' was diffuse and subtle. Working men must be 'improved' to the point where they could properly understand and accept their social and political obligations. Class antagonism must be replaced by a sense of mutuality. The solution lay in the civilising environment of the well furnished club, with

recreation, removed from the evils of the pub; the influence of 'gentlemen', both in management and running of the clubs and in friendly intercourse; and the acquisition of knowledge through lectures and publication.

All this was a clear attempt to intrude upon working class culture and working class life, as it had developed to that point, and impose the accepted ideologies of respectable society. And there lies the paradox. On the face of it, with the working class take over, the clubs failed. But did they? There developed in Britain a working class dedicated not to revolution but, in its political and industrial expression in the shape of the Labour Party and Trade Unions, to reformism and the pursuit of narrow economic goals. Finally incorporated into the texture of capitalism via these institutions, the working men's clubs, originally conceived to inculcate such political and industrial 'responsibility', became redundant in such a role. At the same time the working class was developing, out of the experience of work and community, distinctive social formations, of which, after their control by the working class, the working men's club became a reflection and expression. Emphasising the other side of the original conception, the social and the leisure, the clubs emphasised relaxation and entertainment. The objectives of the founders were secured by other means leaving the clubs as a dimension of working class culture rather than as an expression of working class consciousness. (41)

Before proceeding to an examination of the clubs in a specific context a digression is necessary to examine how the distinctive social formations, in which the working

men's clubs are embedded, have been dealt with. This will not only help to describe the nature of working class life, at least as seen by its observers and commentators, but will also throw some light on how the 'problem' of the working class, so much in the front of the minds of the founders of the club movement, has been treated by literature and sociology. This is necessary since, if as has been suggested, working men's clubs are an important aspect of the working class life they must be examined in the context of the nature of that way of life. In this way it should then be possible to see what light the clubs may throw on an understanding of working-class life and what current understanding of working-class life - mainly through the work of sociologists - can contribute to an understanding of the Working Men's Club.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See section I p. and footnote:
2. George TREMLETT: The First Century, Club and Institute Union, 1962. This book calls itself: 'A Social History with a difference, telling graphically the story of 100 years of Club Life in Great Britain'. It has no references or indication of sources. Neither does it contain any acknowledgements. A letter to the C.I.U. revealed that they no longer had any knowledge of the whereabouts of the author.
3. Henry SOLLY: Working Men's Social Clubs and Educational Institutions, Club and Institute Union, 1867.
4. John TAYLOR: From Self-Help to Glamour: the Working Man's Club, 1860-1972. History Workshop Pamphlet No.7, 1972.
5. That is to say the political expressions of working class life: Trade Unions, the Labour Party, the Co-Operative Society, were increasingly involved in and consulted by governments, with no fundamental change in the essential configuration of society.
6. Henry SOLLY, op cit.
7. *ibid.*
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*
10. *ibid.*
11. *ibid.*
12. *ibid.*
13. *ibid.*
14. *ibid.*
15. *ibid.*
16. *ibid.*
17. George TREMLETT, op cit.

17. John TAYLOR: op cit, p.14.
18. George TREMLETT: op cit, p.17.
19. John TAYLOR: op cit, p.14..
20. A curious character this, but perhaps not untypical of those, even the ostensibly working class, involved in the working men's club movement. See: F.M. LEVENTHALL: Respectable Radical: George Howell and Victorian Working-Class Politics, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971
Howell was born in 1833 and son of a mason and knew hardship in his early life. His formal education finished at twelve but ^{he} continued to attend Sunday School and to read religiously oriented books:

"Imbued at an early age with a consciousness of the hazards of working-class life, he came to regard petit-bourgeois respectability as the bulwark against the hardship he experienced in his youth...He developed a true Victorian sense of propriety, a tendency to priggish self righteousness manifested itself at an early age. Religious teaching sanctioned the repression of joyful impulses. Unflagging industry, the price exacted by economic circumstances had to be transmuted into a moral virtue, and the capacity for humour suffered in the process.... Howell was not only concerned with the vote, but with the spiritual and intellectual improvement of his class through education and propaganda. He had a moderate reformist outlook and accepted the tenets of his age: modification within the existing framework of society..."

21. Quoted in George TREMLETT, op cit, p.15.
22. Henry SOLLY, op cit.
23. George TREMLETT, op cit, p.25.
24. ibid. p.26
25. Quoted in John TAYLOR, op cit, p.29.
26. ibid. p.30.
27. ibid. p.31.
28. ibid. p.32.
29. ibid. p.33.

30. *ibid.* p.34. This is not entirely fair to BOOTH whose appraisal of the clubs in the East End and Hackney reads as follows:

"The 115 clubs in the East End and Hackney can be divided into those which open their doors to strangers and those which do not. Those which do, do so very readily and completely. They have nothing to hide and are often linked to the Working Men's Club and Institute Union...it is not difficult for the social inquirer to obtain trustworthy information about them and even enjoy their hospitality. As to those which decline to open their doors I can give little information except as to the reputation they enjoy which is bad...Others are very disreputable indeed...a combination of the lowest type of dancing saloon with gambling hall...On the whole question whether clubs are on the whole an element of good it would be unfair to set too high a standard. The leaders may consciously realise the higher ideals of the movement, but the rank and file are not above the average of their class...looked at in this way clubs seem to me to be better than public houses which they tend to replace. The language one hears is the language of the streets, stuffed with oaths...evidence of the spirit of self sacrifice is not wanting. In many cases the members do all the repairs and alterations after their days labour...coarse though the fabric be it is shot through with golden threads of enthusiasm...It may be thought that enthusiasm may find better aims, and citizenship some other field than the management of a bar-parlour and 'free and easy'; but taking things as they are, the working mens club is not a bad institution...on the whole these clubs are a bright and lively scene, and very attractive compared to the ordinary homes of the classes from which the members are drawn..."

Quoted in: Albert FRIED and Richard ELLMAN (eds):

Charles Booth's London. A portrait of the poor at the turn of the century drawn from his *Life and Labour of the People in London*, Hutchinson, 1968.

31. John TAYLOR; *op cit*, p.38.

32. *ibid*, p.44.

33. *ibid*.

34. *ibid*, p.46.

35. *ibid*.

36. *ibid*.

37. *ibid*, p.47-48.

- 38. *ibid*, p.51.
- 39. *ibid*, p.52.
- 40. *ibid*, p.56.
- 41. Richard PRICE: The Working Men's Club Movement,
Victorian Social Reform Ideology, Victorian Studies,
December 1971, pp.119-147.

CHAPTER 4

UNDERSTANDING THE WORKING CLASS:

THE 19TH CENTURY

Since its creation in the wake of the Industrial Revolution the 'working class' has presented problems of description, analysis and explanation, to novelists, social reformers and more recently sociologists. In this essay I intend to make a selective choice of historical material, contemporary accounts and the treatment of the working class in literature as a preamble to a more extensive discussion of the more recent contribution to the study of the working class in the shape of sociological research. In the main there will be three themes to be explored. For the nineteenth century, confronted with the fact of the working class for the first time in history, there is the 'response': for the context and the concern Engels: *The Conditions of the Working Class in England*, is a starting point and a landmark: for the fact finding and the beginnings of a deeper interest there is: Henry Mayhew: *Life and Labour* (this is important not only for its intrinsic contribution but as a locus around which turns much of the confusion and contradiction in the Victorian middle class attitude to the working class) and finally for a century still caught up in its ideological confusions there is Charles Booth: *Life and Labour of the People of London*. It must be noted that the working class rarely studied themselves and the analysis of their position was done almost exclusively from the point of view of the dominant value system: that is the ideologies of successful bourgeois individualism. In a century not renowned for its sympathy and humanistic concern for the working class the above selection is not wholly typical and for a more rounded picture the presentation of the working class in fiction is worth examination.

An important second theme deriving from the 19th century but carrying over into the 20th century is the influence of the study of the working class on the development of the discipline of sociology (1). Finally there is the consideration of modern approaches to the working class in the work of sociologists and especially the theoretical issues raised by the position of the working class in modern industrial society. Industrialisation contained three elements: the predominance of the factory system, the division of society into economically based groups or classes, and the overarching dominance of the profit motive and its related ideology: utilitarian individualism and laissez faire. As Max WEBBER points out:

"The real distinguishing feature of the modern factory system is in general...not the implements of work applied but the concentration of ownership of work place, means of work, source of power and raw materials in one and the same hands..." (2)

Simultaneous with this concentration of production was the rise in population and the emergence of the Industrial City. These cities, usually in the north, became identified with the objective expression of the social divisions created by the Industrial Revolution. The concentration of wealth and property in the hands of a few created a pool of labourers, bereft of property, with only their ability to work. Not only did these workers have the barely adequate safety net of peasant land holding taken from them, but they were increasingly subjected to different kinds of social relationship: the 'cash nexus' (3) was born. Older organic ties were broken and new, instrumental ties were put in their place. Men became commodities. Thus the intimate and intricate mutual aid relationship between peasant and master, exploitive as it was, was replaced,

inadequately by the dehumanising relationships of the new industrial society. The decline in the master worker relationship was itself, not only due to the increasing physical separation of the different social classes, but to the increasing importance assigned to the abstract forces of the market place - supply and demand - and the belief that men controlled their own, individual destinies. Workers were no longer whole people, but merely part of an abstract category called labour; to be combined with other factors of production to make up the whole productive process. Out of these conditions the new phenomena of the working class was born.

It is worth noting at this point that the phenomena of 'social class' was itself a product of the Industrial Revolution:

"The word class can be dated, in its most important modern form, from about 1740. Before this it was used, in English to refer to a division or group in schools or colleges. It is only at the end of the 18th century that the modern structure of class in its social sense begins to be built up. First comes lower classes to join lower orders...Then, in the 1790's we get higher classes; middle classes and middling classes follow at once; working class in about 1815. Class prejudice, class legislation, class consciousness, class conflict, and class war follow in the course of the 19th century. The upper middle classes are first heard of in the 1890's the lower middle class in our own century." (4)

All this is important, for much of what follows hinges on the creation at the outset of industrialisation of specific types of relationship, caught in the present day usage of the term 'class'. As Williams points out, the new vocabulary did not betoken the beginning of social divisions in England. It does indicate, however, a new attitude towards them.

Much the same point is made by Asa BRIGGS, in a more extended discussion of the origins of class and its attendant terminology:

"The concept of class...was a product of the large scale economic and social changes of the late 18th and early 19th century...Whatever else may be said...one development is incontrovertible. The language of 'ranks' 'orders' and 'degrees' was finally cast into limbo. The language of class, like the facts of class, remained."
(5)

As an indicator of social relations the term 'class' (6) was first used in the 1820's. The 'chain of connection' was broken and the 'bond of attachment' was dissolved.

As Engels noted:

"The cities first saw the rise of the workers and the middle classes into opposing social groups..." (7)

The phrase 'middle classes' was a product of the conscious pride of industrialists in their part in Britain's greatness. Middle-class consciousness became a reality: identity of interest and a perception of being different from both the new proletariat and the older aristocracy, gave rise to a sense of purpose. A desire to join in the political process. As Briggs suggests:

"...by 1846, not only had the phrase 'middle class' established itself as a political concept, but those people who considered themselves representatives of the middle class were prepared to assert in the strongest possible language their claim to political leadership," (8)

Class thus becomes the characteristic form of stratification in industrial society. Alongside the established 'ruling class' and the emergent middle class was the new working class. Important numerically but socially with no power and little control of their own destiny. However, here too we have evidence of identity of interest and an awareness of common purpose. O'Brien expressed their hopes for social change:

"A spirit of combination has grown up among the working classes...to establish for the productive classes a complete dominion over the fruits of their own industry. ...They (the working classes) aspire to be at the top instead of the bottom of society, or rather that there should be no top or bottom at all." (9)

A chartist expressed the opposition of interest:

"What is our present relation to you a section of the middle class?...it is one of violent opposition. You are the holders of power, participation in which you refuse us; for demanding which you persecute us..."

The sense of purpose and common interest stems from the fact that the new working class enjoyed the least share of resources both social, low status and prestige allied to little power, and economic, very limited command of scarce resources. That the working class were the passive recipients of social change, is just one of the orthodoxies distinguished by E.P. Thompson in his essay on the Making of the English Working Class (10).

In this long essay, questioning the passive recipient of social change notion of the creation of the working class, Thompson distinguishes a number of orthodoxies which have tended to guide historians in examination of the origins and growth of the working class:

"There is the Fabian orthodoxy, in which the great majority of working people are seen as the passive recipients of laissez faire...there is the orthodoxy of the empirical economic historian, in which the working people are seen as the labour force, as migrants, or as the statistical data of surveys. There is the 'Pilgrims Progress' orthodoxy, in which the period is ransacked for the forerunners of the welfare state, progenitors of the Socialist Commonwealth, or more recently early exemplars of rationalist industrial relations..." (11)

Here are the working classes, drained of integrity, humanity and meaning. Treated as a thing: an 'it' of historical scholarship. Class, as Thompson points out is not only the raw material of experience, it is consciousness. It is something which happens in human relationships.

Relationships between people:

"Class happens when some men, as a result of common experience feel and articulate the identity to their interests as between themselves, as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. Class experience is largely determined by the productive relationships which men are born into...Class consciousness is the way these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in tradition, value systems, ideas and institutional forms..." (12)

Groups of people in specific relationship to the means of production, having to sell their labour to it and experiencing the concomitant uncertainties, insecurities and deprivations, began to 'make' themselves into a class:

"The working class did not rise like the sun at the appointed time. It was present at its own making... In the period 1780-1830 most English working people came to feel an identity of interest as between themselves and as against their rulers...." (13)

This emerging working class became a major preoccupation with the emerging middle class and the 'old' order, both of whom saw an unruly working class loosely tied to the social structure, and by no means committed to the ideals of entrepreneurial capitalism, as a serious threat to social order. Initial response to this threat were crude and repressive but successful. After this a combined process of discovery - the working class became one of the most researched and least understood groups in history - a moral education took place.

The process of embourgeoisement, or at least a dimension of it, will be dealt with in the section on the Working Men's Club movement. For the moment I wish to concentrate on the process of discovery.

Nisbett points to the Industrial Revolution as the main stimulus to sociology as a mode of understanding the social world and distinguishes amongst the factors of pressing importance the condition of the working class:

"The most striking and widely treated of these aspects was the condition of the working class. For the first time in the history of European thought, the working class...as distinct from the poor, downtrodden or humble...becomes the subject of both moral and analytical concern..." (14)

Nathan GLAZER (15) also takes up a similar position on the origins of scientific sociology. He suggests that what distinguishes sociology as a field of intellectual activity is its 'special methods of research' rather than its subject matter or its conclusions. Conceding that 'approaches' to social questions may be an interesting line of debate, he turns to methods, since much attention has been placed on 'approaches' and very little on methods, when,

"the particular method of research, represents a more radical break with tradition..." (16)

Sociology is concerned with ideas as well as operations but:

"Present day sociologists have more in common with the earnest men of the early 19th century, mainly in England who painfully built up a picture of social reality, detail by detail, than with the strong minded thinkers disdainful of such detail..." (17)

The distinguishing characteristic of this new approach to the study of society which marked it off from philosophical speculation, casual accounts and religious and moral formulations was the 'scientific spirit': the social world could, it was suggested, only be grasped by exploring empirical realities, by obtaining facts, and giving attentions to methods of fact collection. This may be disagreeable to those who think that 'grubbing out the facts' necessary, but not sufficient grounds for the distinctiveness of sociology as an intellectual endeavour; and who think that the work of Comte, Spencer and Marx

may have made a more lasting contribution to human understanding. Additionally it ignores what has become a sociological truism that what we find depends on what we look for, which in turn depends on prior ideologies which are socially determined. What we find and how we make sense of our discovery then is a product of social relationships, no less so in the 19th century than today.

Inadequate as this account is it points, in a very different manner to the fact indicated by Nisbett, that the presence at the centre of early industrial society of a working class, tied only tenuously to the new society was a source of concern to the ruling class:

"The immediate interest...was the conditions of the new masses in the cities...they were concerned at times to demonstrate that the effects of industry...upon the workers and their children was not as fearful...as propagandists insisted..." (18)

Naively he continues, referring to middle class fact collectors:

"...but ultimately they were concerned with science, with gathering facts independent of arguments they could serve..." (19)

Sociology as a product of the political, economic and intellectual upheavals of the late 18th and early 19th century which traditional perspectives could not comprehend; sociology as the product of the disinterested search for social truth or sociology as the desire of a powerful group to more fully understand and cope with a perceived threat. Which ever, the working class was a cause for concern. And from this concern stemmed a new way of looking at society as a whole, and a long tradition of examining the characteristics of what has become known as working-class culture. In the main efforts to study the working class were a product of dramatic industrial and urban change and in the face of frightening develop-

ments like cholera and radical protest movements. Middle class investigators saw systematic fact collecting at once as both scientific and a necessary first step to formulating policy and programmes of action. Eileen YEO distinguishes three broad types of investigation (20).

First the increasing use of government investigating bodies: the Royal Commissions and Select Committees which took evidence of the administration of the Poor Law, on the health of towns and the conditions of industry. The prejudices of the investigators coloured both the scope and terms of enquiry as well as the conclusions. Few of the reports were concerned with the extent or causes of poverty or between the relationship between employment conditions and poverty. The political economy maxims of lack of interference in the play of the market and the undesirability of any legislative interference were the basis of this type of research. Second was the influence of voluntary statistical societies who carried out rigorous investigations into the conditions of the local poor. Drawn from the prosperous and powerful philanthropic local businessmen, the members were satisfied with the new system of manufacturing but worried by the concentration in the centre of large towns of the poor. These groups were now separate from the influence of the upper classes traditionally sources of control and guidance. The statistical societies took on the role, not only of fact collectors, but gatherers of information which would serve as a basis for effective philanthropic effort. Efforts were largely concentrated on the degree of discipline in the poor, moral and intellectual conditions

were thus of central concern. Thus these were social discipline surveys and not poverty surveys, based on the assumption that the broader social and economic environment had little bearing on respectable behaviour.

Finally we have the low life reporting. With roots in light hearted accounts of 'rambles' in quasi criminal (21) London, this type of reporting lacked discipline, coherence and was concerned to create word pictures of a world unknown to its middle-class readership. From the beginning the working class was to grow both socially and geographically apart from the middle class. Nowhere more so than in Manchester the background for an attempt to comprehend the position of the 'new' working class of industrial society, which was of a different order from the types of survey just discussed. Frederick ENGELS: The Condition of the Working Class in England.

As has been suggested the historical experience of industrialisation is not to be separated from that of urbanisation. They occurred together and reinforced each other, with the effects of both being intensified by the dramatic demographic changes of the period. Thus the impact of industrialisation: industrial discipline, conditions of work, terms of employment, continual insecurity and competition cannot be separated from the conditions of living in the new industrial towns, from housing and sanitary conditions, from the institutions, or lack of relief and welfare and the densities and stresses of living. Manchester became what might be called the embodiment of what was happening to the world. It became the paradigm of the Industrial Revolution. The reflection, on a more monstrous scale, of what was happening to towns elsewhere. Not the least in the unprecedented growth in population:

1773	24,000	
1801	70,000	at the highest rate of growth 1821-
1831	142,000	1841 the increase was 45%
1841	250,000	

By the middle of the 1840's if we include Salford and contiguous built up areas the population was 400,000. (22) Stratified in a number of ways, Manchester presented a fairly typically picture of what has happened or was about to happen elsewhere in the formation of class and class consciousness. (23) The main line of demarcation was economic. Estimates of the socioeconomic background suggest a working class population of some 64% in 1830. Salford, close by was 74% and many outlying towns were as high as 90%. An important aspect of this economic stratification was not only its social segregation but its increasing ecological segregation. Additionally the town had been unforeseen, unplanned and unregulated. It was the human relations in this setting that Engels was to attempt to understand.

The son of a wealthy German cotton manufacturer, Frederick Engels came to England in 1842. Reacting against his home background and to the horrors of industrialisation he took up a 'left-wing' position and began to mount a critique of society which, in his association with the new English proletariat, took the form of his: Conditions of the English Working Class. Dedicated to 'the working class of Great Britain' it was researched in 1842-43 and written up in 1845. Ironically it was not published in English in a British edition until 1892. As Hobsbawm says:

"The idea of writing a book about the conditions of the labouring class was not original...The 1830's and 1840's, a decisive period in the evolution of capitalism and the working class movement therefore saw books and pamphlets and enquiries into the conditions of the working class multiplying all over Europe. Engels' book is the most eminent writing of this kind..." (24)

Engels' work differs from the majority of contemporary work in a number of ways. It was, as Engels himself noted, the first book to deal with the working class as a whole, and not with a segment or industry. More important was his analysis of industrial capitalism and its political and social consequences. As Engels says:

"The Industrial Revolution has the same importance for England as the political revolution for France and the philosophical revolution for Germany...The most momentous result of this Industrial Revolution is the English proletariat..." (25)

Briefly Engels' argument and analysis takes the following form.

Beginning with a sketch of the Industrial Revolution, the work is unique in basing its analysis on the Industrial Revolution, then very tentative having only been framed as late as the 1820's. His account of the actual historical transformation of society has no claim to originality being based on Peter Gaskell: *The Manufacturing Population of England*. However, his analysis of the process involved is both cogent and original. Industrialisation, Engels saw, was responsible for a gigantic process of concentration and polarisation, in which there was created an increasingly large proletariat and an increasingly small bourgeoisie; both in the context of an increasingly urban society. The rise of capitalist enterprise destroys the small commodity producer, peasantry and petty bourgeoisie: the decline of these intermediary strata deprives the working class of any possibility of upward mobility and confines him to the ranks of the proletariat, in which, although Engels does not use the term, class consciousness will develop, alongside associated institutions and sets of values. The process of concentration, polarisation and urbanisation were all connected with mechanised industry

requiring capital investment and the accumulation of large numbers of proletarians. The mechanisms of capitalism: large units of production attract surplus labour, wages will fall, other industrialists will be attracted, small communities will expand; make cities the typical location of capitalism. Here unrestrained competition and exploitation appear. Those with no means of production are reduced to labouring for a pittance or starvation. Life becomes insecure, unsettled and uncertain. Engels sought to answer questions like: What kind of working class is produced by capitalism? What are its conditions of life? What sort of individual and collective behaviour results from these material conditions? In reply Engels puts forward the following answers.

Capitalism forced the new proletariat, often from non-industrial background into the most appalling conditions. They were left to starve, and rot, neglected, despised and coerced, not only by the impersonal forces of capitalism but by the bourgeoisie as a class; they were regarded as objects which either have or have not got utility. Bourgeois law imposes factory discipline, fines them, jails them, imposes its wishes on them. The bourgeoisie discriminates against them, imposes the 'New Poor Law' upon them. In all this one thing stands out. This systematic dehumanisation insulates the workers from bourgeois ideology and illusion. Out of this springs an awareness of condition and in some cases of power. Responses are different: some succumb; some are demoralised, indicated by drunkenness, violence and crime; some accept passively. But, real humanity and dignity are found in protest, another response. Trade unionism, Chartism and Socialism were the foundations

of this response.

The apocalyptic mission of the working class that Engels saw coming in the most impressive slump of the 19th century, has not yet been fulfilled. This theme and its ramification for an understanding of the position of the working class in modern society will be taken up later. Finally, commenting on Engels' tribute to humanity and the working class, Hobsbawm says:

"It is a book of its time. But nothing can take its place in the library of every 19th century historian and every one interested in the working class movement. It remains an indispensable work and a landmark in the fight for the emancipation of humanity." (26)

The work of Engels was unique in so many ways, but examination of the 'conditions of the working class', as has been suggested, was by no means unprecedented. The decades before and after Engels were associated, for reasons already stated, with a vast amount of work on the poor, depressed and dangerous classes. One such work which differs dramatically from Engels both in approach and content is the work of Henry Mayhew. Cast in the 'low life' reporting genre of writing about the working class, Mayhew's work achieved an altogether different level of achievement.

Academic opinion of the value of Mayhew's work is divided. Some sociological comment reduces Mayhew to a journalistic voyeur whose contribution to the development of sociology and whose insight into the life of mid-century working class London was minimal: 'there is no theory and by and large there is description without selection and analysis... additionally he fails to distinguish between his evidence and his recommendations...prescription is mixed with description' (27). Ruth GLASS: 'information of an impressionistic kind produced nothing at all except perhaps sent-

imental misgivings and regrets' T.S. SIMEY (28):

'disorganised and unsystematic' GLASS: 'Mayhew's findings ...provide little more than a panorama of poverty...they suffered from his undisciplined curiosity and desire to make the poor known to the rich...' (29) H.J. DYOS. A more appreciative note is struck by Eileen YEO:

"On the basis of his earlier and largely unstudied work, Mayhew emerges as a self-conscious investigator whose survey of industrial conditions in London and attempts at economic and sociological analysis entitle him to an important place in the history of social investigation..." (30)

Commenting on Mayhew's position in his time, he says:

"Mayhew's ability to see poverty in the round, as the product of an economic system, with devastating moral and social results, yet varied cultural manifestations amounted to a unique and short lived moment in middle class consciousness." (31)

The summer of 1849 saw the conjunction of two events: relief at the recession of chartism, and horror at the incidence of cholera. The latter, Thompson (32) suggests became the focus of class antagonisms and resentments and Mayhew embarked on an exercise in social reconciliation. In October the Morning Chronicle announced the start of a series of articles which would present:

"a full and detailed description of the moral, material, and physical condition of the industrial poor throughout England." (33)

Mayhew published in the Morning Chronicle between 1849 and December 1850, eighty-two letters. These were, however, part of one, developing and unfinished project which spilled over to become: London Labour and the London Poor. Thus Mayhew embarked on the most massive and ambitious survey of the mid-nineteenth century poor.

The intention of the Morning Chronicle series was a descriptive social survey of the whole country at a point in time. Ostensibly confined to a study of the 'industrial

poor' it became wider to include accounts of the social structure of whole communities.

Mayhew's proposal was to give a receptive public a wider range of empirical information about the working class than was previously available. And, since the newspaper and the novel was often the only point of contact many of the middle and upper classes had with the working class this was important.

The plan was to present working class life as wholly and impersonally as possible which was part of the reconciliatory nature of the exercise. Class conflict was seen as a part of a wider process of industrialisation and urbanisation. Chadwick's Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain 1842 had drawn attention to the importance of the increasing separation of the classes: social contact was reduced and geographical distance was increased. Using Morning Chronicle Material P.E. Razzell (34) shows that deference, the attitude most likely to be conducive to social order was most evident when employers lived in the community and could be seen to be making paternalistic provision for their employees in the shape of housing, health, etc. Deference could be induced too via Sunday School, a point of contact with middle and upper class people and a context for the transmission of the values of self help, individual achievement. However these points of contact were becoming less evident. As R.W. Mainwright suggests:

"The changes in the shape and complexity of society had radically altered the consciousness of human relationship to it...the numerically increased range of human contact could not be experienced or recognised in the context of a whole way of life. In this way society is seen as becoming less knowable through personal experience and vicarious sources of contact like Labour and the Poor were invested with a crucially informing role." (35)

The provincial correspondents covered more ground than Mayhew, who confined his attention to London. They attempted to present for each community its typical and untypical social features. Mayhew on the other hand was more concerned with detailed studies of trades, occupations and sub-cultures than to whole communities. And in the course of his work came to his own empirical critique of capitalism.

To turn in a little detail to Mayhew's contribution. He wished to establish systematically the conditions of employment, wage levels in metropolitan trades and to relate these to the life styles of the poor. He saw that an entirely statistical account, larded with moral explanations, so common at the time, was insufficient; the opinions of the poor, their expectations and aspirations, their evaluation of their lot in life were as important as income levels. In this he was anthropologist as well as journalist. Mayhew never treated the poor simply as economic man. Methodologically, he was also something of an innovator. In an attempt to get away from the low-life journalism he evolved a method of enquiry which included testimony from working men and employers added to form government reports. In the end in his concern for accuracy and representativeness he worked out a number of approaches which included collecting information from employers, tradesmen and merchants, local authorities, voluntary societies and the police. He worked hard to create a coherent framework for his survey and, borrowing from biology, he made efforts to classify his findings, with the trade as the characteristic unit of investigation.

Mayhew made other contributions. Not only did he finally mount an attack on the dominant ideology and its way of perceiving poverty he also made some tentative initiatives. As Eileen YEO points out:

"The political economists, seen as the custodians of the dominant ideology, came in for near libellous abuse..." (36)

He saw that the work of the political economists was an attempt to buttress the capitalist interest:

"That which is said by the economists to be of the greatest possible interest to the community is a gain only to the small portion of it termed the moneyed class." (37)

There followed in Mayhew's work a convoluted attack on the economic orthodoxies of the time, and he attempted, often with vast amounts of evidence of inconsistent and uncertain quality, and with great prolixity, to indicate the contradictions of capitalisms. Like his contemporaries the Owenites and like Marx, he saw the activity of capitalism as essentially exploitive, not only because it led to the impoverishment of the workers, but because it robbed the workers of the value of his labour. Mayhew was no socialist, he believed in private property, all he required was equity in the distribution of wages. As Eileen YEO says:

"In the end (and not surprisingly) Mayhew did not destroy and re-make the world of economic orthodoxy in which he lived..." (38)

At another level too Mayhew came close to two important sociological concepts and in the cause of which turned much of Victorian moralism on its head. To the Victorian mind poverty was a product of feckless improvidence: bad morals caused poverty. Additionally any deviation from a way of life conceived as being proper was construed as

being evil and disorganised. Finally the 19th century bourgeoisie formulated a conception of cultural homogeneity in which all things were perceived in, understood in and given meaning in the same way. All of this Mayhew called into question. Early in his work in the study of the moral and social impact of casual labour he developed the idea that low wages and irregular work tended to lead to unstable and improvident habits:

"Regularity of habits are incompatible with irregularity of income...it is morally impossible that the class of labourers who are casually employed should be either industrious or temperate...where there is the greatest want there will be the greatest excesses..." (39)

Thus an important Victorian assumption was overturned. Additionally Mayhew recorded the expression of satisfactions and discontents and where in their social lives working people felt that their expectations had been frustrated and strains imposed. In this Mayhew came close to the concept of relative deprivation. He found that privileged groups of artisans had suffered a sharp decline in income and felt that their dignity and independence were undermined. It was amongst this group that Mayhew found the greatest responsiveness to protest movements:

"The artisans are almost to a man red hot politicians... they begin to view their class, not as a mere isolated group of workmen, but as an integral part of the nation... the unskilled labourers are a different class of people... instead of entertaining violent democratic opinions, they have no political opinions whatever, or if they do possess any they rather lead to the maintenance of things as they are than to the ascendancy of working people." (40)

Finally in his work on the costermongers Mayhew came close to the concept of sub-culture. The costermongers were the most casual of all workers who formed a distinctive way of life different from traditional middle class forms and

separate from other workmen, which, short of being dis-organised formed a coherent and cohesive culture. Rather foolishly, but following the current ethological notions, Mayhew failed to fully explore the notion of sub-culture and concocted his now famous 'wandering tribes' analogy. Here Mayhew showed himself to be a true Victorian. He suggested that within 'civilised' society people in various 'social stages' could exist side by side. These 'wandering tribes' were the producers of social disorganisation and:

"are all more or less distinguished for their high cheek bones and protruding jaws...use of slang language...lex ideas of property...improvidence...repugnance to labour ...disregard of female honour...love of cruelty... pugnacity...utter want of religion..." (41)

Here, with a certain ingenuity and a little sophistication is once more the Victorian conception of the working class. Mayhew cannot be blamed for being a man of his times nor for being caught up in the forces which not only gave rise to the problems he set out to investigate but also coloured the ways these problems were conceived and perceived. Perhaps it is a tribute to the man and his work that despite all this his contribution is distinctive and bears the witness to a real attempt to understand what working class life in mid-Victorian England was like. In a real sense he may be said to have started a tradition of investigation into the poor and the poorest which is still to be found in British sociology today. As Eileen YEO concludes:

"Mayhew's imaginative leaps into the minds and hearts of the poor...made a rare contribution to human understanding ...he knew that people are not to be treated as averages ...The communal traditions of groups of people, their aspirations and fears have to be understood..." (44)

Mayhew's work was very much a part of the 'condition of the people' debate which dominated the Victorian middle-class consciousness. But, in this debate who, or what

was being studied? 'The people'? 'the labouring population'? 'the poorer classes'? Answers to this question are important since on them will depend how a large section of the population are treated by legislation, administration or philanthropy. More important however is the possibility that in approaching the question a tradition will be established which will have influence well beyond the 19th century. The point is that answers to who is being studied may reveal a common image which may lead to assumptions about common identity.

Mayhew's work was to be:

"...a full and detailed description of the moral, intellectual material and physical conditions of the industrial poor in England..."

However, his work was centred on London and was thus unrepresentative of the much larger body of rural and urban poor. Moreover, from the start he tended to concentrate on 'the street folk': hucksters, dock-labourers, flower girls and the like. These were hardly representative of the work force of the metropolis. The census of 1851 gives the largest occupational group as domestic workers (200,000) followed by tailors, dressmakers and milliners (60,000), and shoemakers (40,000), as well as the less numerically, but nonetheless important, artisans and self employed groups. The population he examined was, in his own words, only 'one-fortieth' of the working population. More important than numbers, though to some extent arising from it, was the 'characterisation'. The people he studied were a 'race apart'. Less a class in the Marxist sense than a species in the Darwinian sense. In this way:

"...the image from a small highly distinctive group of moral and social 'aliens'...got superimposed on the entire class of London Labour and London Poor..."

In the main these images were already in the minds of his audience, hence their ready acceptance. He did not create a novel image of the poor but he did:

"...reflect, disseminate and perpetuate a not uncommon image..."

His work is a product of fear and anxiety:

"An atmosphere of anxiety and crisis, a sense of psychic and social dislocation pervades Mayhew's work...it had all the symptoms of an epidemic situation - feverish, frenetic, anxiety-ridden, demoralised and dehumanised. The society he depicted was in a visible state of dislocation, the people in a morbid pathological condition, permanently critical and imminently fatal..."

There was, his work confirmed, a class of paupers, a race of street folk: uncivilised and unsocialised. Thus we have a sub-cultural world-though Mayhew himself never refined the notion thus. The effect was to pauperise the poor by presenting the most distinctive and dramatic images of the lower classes, the very extravagance and exoticism of the picture lent it truth, then imposing it on the lower class as a whole.

Thus an important tradition in the examination and discussion of the under class was, if not exactly established, given sufficient substance to influence ideas in this area for a long time. Thus was emphasised an image of the under class created by the dominant class. The under class becomes a separate entity possessing characteristics - a culture - distinctive and worthy of examination.

After Mayhew the study of poverty was fragmented; diagnosis and treatment of social problems took a new turn: attention was increasingly directed to public health and sanitary sciences, crime and delinquency was increasingly seen as a product of a troubled family environment, housing was

discussed in some depth. Matters of money and occupation were touched upon only indirectly and when they could not be avoided. Such developments were partly related to increased professionalisation of certain groups like lawyers and doctors who attempted to legitimise their position by special areas of expertise allied to a public service ethic. Not until the 1870's and 1880's did economic depression and increased working class militancy once more direct attention to poverty in the round and pave the way for the work of Booth and Rowntree.

Charles BOOTH and Sebohm ROWNTREE enjoy a dominating position in the history of social thought and more especially in the history of British social science. Not that either discovered poverty, for as Raymond WILLIAMS points out:

"Taking only the nineteenth century, and the new problems of widespread urban poverty in expanding industrial society no reader of the early radicals - Carlile, Owen, Place Cobbett - no reader of Dickens or Elisabeth Gaskell or Disraeli, of Edwin Chadwick and the Mayhew brothers, of Carlyle, Ruskin, Kingsley...and so many others could really be ignorant....." (43)

What Booth, in particular, did was to continue the inquiry on a large scale within the new established tradition mentioned above, and to introduce and formalise methods of enquiry. In many ways a contrast with Mayhew, who so nearly came close to modern socio-anthropology and important concepts with which to understand the society in which he lived, Booth was never 'with' the poor his work lies in the great tradition of 'abstracted empiricism'. Assuming that the facts speak for themselves, his was to be the impartial mind which would organise them and from them formulise wider generalisations.

The context for Booth's work was the dominance of middle class values. The middle class controlled society. They were the masters of industry, commerce and the professions: benefitting from capitalism at home and imperialism abroad they set the moral, political and cultural tone of English life. Their central belief was laissez-faire individualism and the pursuit of self interest. Despite this some contradictions were beginning to be perceived both by the middle class and the working class. As Booth's partner was to observe:

"The origin of the ferment is to be discovered in a new consciousness of sin amongst men of intellect and men of property...a growing uneasiness, amounting to conviction, that the industrial organisation, which had yielded rent, interest and profits on a stupendous scale, had failed to provide a decent livelihood and tolerable conditions for a majority of the inhabitants of Great Britain..." (44)

The ferment which Beatrice Webb referred to was reflected in a greater militancy on the part of the working class than hitherto. Union membership was rising, strikes were more frequent and perhaps for the first time socialist ideas had a receptive audience. At the same time segments of the middle class were also reacting to the social conditions around them. Romantic strands, criticising predacious capitalism for depriving people of traditional English freedom and causing the departure from the 'golden age of master and man, reflected in the work of William Morris, John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle, were woven into the more political criticisms of the Fabian Society, founded in 1884, and the variety of socialist and Marxist sects.

It was in response to one product of this crisis of conscience in the middle class that Booth set about his work

on the poor of London's East End. Hard on the heels of the publication of the Rev. Henry Mearns's: *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*, a graphic portrait of destitution, squalor and vice came the publication in 1885 of the results of a survey by the Marxist Social Democratic Federation. This suggested that one in four Londoners were in abject poverty. Published in the 'ferment' already referred to the report raised serious cause for concern. Booth set out to expose the report as gross exaggeration. A wealthy business man, Booth had, since his arrival in London, taken an interest in public issues especially poverty. Dissatisfied with, if not positively antagonistic to, socialism as an unwarranted intrusion into the liberty of the citizen, and feeling that philanthropy, however well meant was not a solution, he made tentative incursions into London's slum life the better to understand it, in the shape of walks and later by living amongst 'typical' families.

Unaffected by the work of Marx or Comte, Booth was mainly moved by the conception that the facts would speak for themselves, given an impartial observer such as himself, dedicated to their discovery and documentation. He was however impressed with the struggle for survival that went on in the streets:

"...the clash of contest, man against man, and men against fate - the absorbing interest of a battle field - a rush of human life as fascinating to watch as the current of a river...the feeling that I have just described - this excitement of life which can accept murder as a dramatic incident, and drunkenness as the buffoonery of the stage...looked at in this way what a drama it is..."
(46)

Beyond merely counting the poor, Booth was interested in the causes of poverty. To see how much poverty was related to 'questions of habit' the problem of immorality

'questions of circumstances' illness and large families, 'questions of employment'. Booth listed income levels and conditions of poverty under eight 'classes': from A who were the hopeless poor: 'occasional labourers, loafers and semi-criminals' through to H who were the comfortable middle class. Despite his poverty line of 18 to 20 shillings per week for a 'moderate' sized family, into which income range the C and D groups fell, the group who could make ends meet if they were frugal, and self disciplined, Booth's main interest was with this group and the other two at the lower end of the social scale groups A and B. Both these were more or less in permanent want. Since his real interest was in these classes and not in the poverty line they do not represent rigorous income categories, rather they have a lot to do with external appearance and respectability. As Eileen YEO points out:

"The crucial Class A, was one of the two classes who were very poor, was not an income category but a receptacle for morally obnoxious types." (47)

Booth was perhaps the last of the Victorian moralists to examine the working class in any detail with the overriding assumption that the ethic of individualism would answer both the problems of the poor and of the wider society. In some measure he presents a paradox in attitudes to the working class. At one level the honest empiricist helped to destroy the myth that poverty was the result of improvidence, idleness, thriftlessness and irresponsibility. Most poverty he discovered was related (caused by) to employment: lack of or low pay in. Allied to this was sickness, and family size. In only a small number of cases was poverty related to 'idleness drunkenness and

thriftlessness'. At another level he was unable to 'relate' to poverty or to see it as an indication of the contradictions of the society of which it was a part. An unbridgeable gap existed between Booth and the poor. Thus despite his shift of emphasis from the poor themselves to wider 'collective' causes his was a search for acceptable solutions within the existing social framework. His means of treating poverty rested on the distinction between the more or less self sufficient categories C and D and the hopeless poor in categories A and B. While in the main he counselled patience and calm in dealing with the poor since he saw no immediate threat of revolution, he did see this category as a threat to the social structure. They must therefore be dealt with. But how? Category B were to be reeducated in labour camps and then returned to the world when they would take up their position in categories C and D. If they failed to respond to this treatment then it was to be the work house with their children to be removed to care when presumably the miracle could be wrought on them. As for the lowest category of all group A these were beyond redemption and were to be 'harried out of existence'. This would start a long process by which the remaining groups would earn more money, join groups E and F and provide the ultimate justification for utilitarian individualism. These groups were to be assisted by education in self reliance and liberalism. Booth in many ways marks the end of a long debate about the working class after his work, and aided by his one time assistant Beatrice Potter, who left Booth to pursue her belief that the causes of poverty suggested

that its cure lay in the reorganisation of society, poverty was seen as a 'social problem' not an individual one. Perhaps for a brief period in the 1950's the problems which concerned Booth have not been of such pressing interest. Novelistic, journalistic and political interest in the working class took the place of research and not until the post War period did a very different group of workers turn their attention once more to the 'problem' of the working class as a matter for sustained sociological research and comment.

Before looking in more detail at this development it may be worth while to look briefly at the light that literature throws on attitudes to the working class in the 19th century.

The representation of the working class in Victorian literature can be seen in terms of two distinct periods. Both were in large measure responsive to similar circumstances. Both were times of social upheaval in which an assertive working class compelled people (the middle class) to look more closely at the social, economic and political structure of society. In the 1840's and 1850's the pressure came from the outcry at the conditions of the industrial worker and the panic at the activities of chartists. (48) In the 1880's and 1890's concern with slum conditions and debate about socialism was the spur. The two periods produce two types of novel. In the earlier period Manchester is the focus for the industrial novel. Manchester thus became the symbol of both the greatness and the shame of the industrial revolution. In the other period attention moved to the East End of London and was given prominence in the urban novel of the period. Again the duality of greatness (Imperialism)

existing along side shameful poverty was the focus of attention. In both cases the novelist followed rather than anticipated the forces of change. Crisis and concern provides the social framework for fiction. Thus we get the depiction of a social world alien both to the writer and his audience. A world normally closed but revealed in times of social crisis.

The working-class novel is mainly propagandist. Written by and for people who were not working class. Rarely do they treat working-class character as being composed of ordinary human beings who experience the range of feeling and emotion, social and physical relationships that it the province of the novelist to explore. Rather they contain implicitly or explicitly class judgements: the working class are not really different from other people, they are not really violent, as long as just complaints are heeded there is nothing to fear. Otherwise they contain prescriptions. What the poor want is; more hospitals, houses, schools, workhouses. The most important single fact about fictional working man is his class. The Victorian novelist presents his characters in relation to specific social issues and antidotes. There is an ever present sense of social purpose in the novel which makes the authors class position and theory very clear.

The urban novel was the most common but in each the working man is easily recognised. He is part of a composite picture called labour and is shown to be in conflict with a further composite picture called capital. Workers share in such things as common skills, occupations, wages and most of all interests and attitudes...a common culture. One preoccupation is to show that even in the working

class world there are hierarchies the same as in the wider society. A matter taken up many years later by sociologists. Often the novels reflect a lingering romanticism for an older more communal rural culture in which with great solemnity families help each other or gather together for supper or conversation. In all there is no sense of spontaneity or joy. One significant difference between the industrial and urban novel is that the former sees town life as being made up of two large, economically interdependent, conflicting classes. The urban novel on the other hand tends to stress the variety and mystery of the London streets. It concentrates on the bizarre and the grotesque. On what distinguishes one group within the working class from another. On contrast rather than conflict.

Keating distinguishes five types of novel in which the working class play less than a minor part. (49) Those novels which deal with a cross section of social life in which the working class are part of a total social pattern. The romance. Here the working class are presented as ugly and debased. Their way of life is generally shown to be inferior and something to be escaped from. The non romantic novel set entirely in the working class environment. Influenced by Mayhew it contains a more perceptive picture of working class life and employs some accurate sociological observation. The 'condition of people' novel. Aimed at transforming attitudes. Finally those novels directed at a working class audience which were aimed at changing manners. Within these novels a number of working class characters appear. Respectable, the skilled artisan devoted to family and neighbours. An

idealised contrast to drunkenness he is the stabilising force between revolutionary sentiment and middle class orthodoxy. Intellectual, absent from pre 1880's fiction he plays an important part in working class movements. Poor, unskilled, illiterate, an object of pity. Especially as he is characterised by high standards of morality and good neighbourliness. Debased. Drunken, brutal and vicious. Really beyond help, Eccentric. Working class in occupation and environment but emphasis is placed on personal idiosyncracies such as strange occupations or odd and humorous manners of speech. Finally criminal. Petty robbers, pickpockets, confidence tricksters. However disparate the various working class groups, they did share a common culture, a culture quite cut off from the middle and upper classes. What determines a character's class position is not merely environment or income; what matters is how far the persona associates himself in terms of status, values and attitudes with his working class environment. The presentation of the working class during the 19th century was concerned with the possibility that the working class may resort to violence as a solution to their problems. The problem is most apparent in industrial novels since here we have the exploration of a mass image of the working class. Thus, while the suffering was shown, 'power' was the primary concern. However the novelists gave little credence to the idea that the working class would use their power. The workers were presented as not being able to organise protest. Nor does the position change with the discovery of the East End after the 1880's as Keating suggests:

"The discovery of the East End gave the urban workers an identity, but an identity compounded of suffering and passivity rather than suffering and power." (50)

In many of the novels the blame for class conflict is placed on the employers. However, this does not imply a working class viewpoint. The social philosophy of the novelists requires change, but change which, while altering class relationships, does not affect the balance of power. Thus while blaming employers some sympathy is evoked for the worker's appalling conditions without implying that there is anything fundamentally wrong with the social structure as a whole. Blame was thus placed on individuals, be they employers or employees and in this way to suggest that attempts of the workers to speak for themselves were unnecessary. The need for reform lies in the individuals themselves not the social systems of which they are a part. With one or two minor examples both the working class and their political aspirations were treated with disdain. Thus the novelist, reflecting the society of which he was a part, views the working class with alarm, pity, disdain, ridicule and amusement but never with any sense of obligation or responsibility, never with any deeper modes of understanding than those with which a conception of man as 'thing' could provide.

While social reformers, nascent social scientists and novelists were exploring the working class, the members of the group thus described were engaged in evolving their own response to the facts of industrial capitalism as they knew them. Through exploitation, deprivation, squalor uncertainty, patronisation and all the degradation which followed for the many from the triumph of the few, there emerged a working-class committed at almost every level

to a different way of life and different values. Writing of the emergence of this culture, with special reference to London, Gareth Steadman Jones says:

"In England today, the idea of a working class culture, of a distant working-class way of life, is practically a cliché. It is still a major preoccupation of humour, or etiquette, of creative literature and of literary and sociological investigation...But it was only at the beginning of the twentieth century - in London at least - that middle class observers began to realise that the working class was not simply without culture of morality but in fact possessed a culture of its own..." (51)

What were the essentials of this culture? In locating its emergence in the early years of the twentieth century Steadman Jones suggests that if the working class was made in the period 1790-1836 as suggested by E.P. Thompson then it was remade in the period 1870-1908. Thus we are faced with a contrast between a 'combative' working class culture bent on a radical alteration in the nature of society and its position in it and the superimposition of collectivist values on the prevailing individualistic values of the middle class. Thompson says:

"As contrasted with middle class ideas of individualism or at best service, what is properly meant by working class culture...is the basic collective idea and the institutions, manners, thoughts, customs and intentions which flow from this...." (52)

While this collectivist culture remained intact and relatively impervious to middle class evangelism, as Steadman Jones says:

"...the middle class failed to create the working class in its own image. The great majority of London workers were not Christian, provident, chaste or temperate..." (53)

it ceased to maintain a positive and combative attitude to the prevailing social order. Thus while distinctive values, customs, traditions and institutions emerged in the working class there did not appear a distinctive pro-

letarian ideology. Once chartism had been defeated any idea that the working class could change society was defeated also. As Steadman Jones says the impetus of working class life lay elsewhere:

"It was concentrated into trade unions, co-ops, friendly societies, all indicating defacto recognition of the existing social order as the inevitable framework of action..." (54)

Working class aspirations were thus channelled into acceptable forms. With the rise of the Labour party and the increased importance of the trade unions the working class became a subordinate partner in the running of the state machine. As Steadman Jones says in contrasting the Chartists concrete and clear view of the state with that of the emergent labour leaders of late Victorian and Edwardian Britain:

"The emphasis had shifted from power to welfare... Socialism...meant the abolition of poverty..." (55)

All this was at the 'civic' level. At the 'cultural' level we get a way of life based not on school, library, evening class, chapel and an urgent need for betterment but on pub, club, sporting paper, race course, music hall and a need for leisure and enjoyment. What Steadman Jones class the 'culture of consolation'. Commenting on Booth's observations he says:

"The final impression conveyed by Booth was of a working class culture which was both impermeable to outsiders, and yet predominantly conservative in character: a culture in which the central focus was not 'trade unions and friendly societies, cooperative effort, temperance propaganda and politics' but 'pleasure, amusement, hospitality and sport'." (56)

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Since the main concern of this thesis is not the influence on the growth of sociology this point is touched on only briefly.
2. Max WEBBER: General Economic History, 1928.
3. A term, variously attributed to Marx, Disraeli and many others, was first used by CARLYLE, see: Asa BRIGGS and John SAVILLE: Essays in Labour History, Papermac 1967, p.47: The language of Class in Early 19th Century England. As the title suggests this article deals with the change in terminology of social relations which accompanied the Industrial Revolution.
4. Raymond WILLIAMS: Culture and Society 1796-1950, Penguin 1964, p.14.
5. BRIGGS and SAVILLE, op cit; p.43.
6. The approach to the class structure taken here is a fairly basic one that class positions are related to positions in the productive process; firstly as either owner or non-owner of the means of production, but also recognising the presence of a 'landed' upper class, gentry or aristocracy. Thus we obtain a basic structure of Upper Class, Middle Class and Working Class. In the early 19th century the middle class was essentially the entrepreneurial middle class later to be joined by the professional middle class in a merger at some points with the aristocracy to form THE middle class. Separate, that is, from the later phenomenon of the lower middle class which arose with the emergence of those clerical workers and minor servants of the ruling groups, created by the rise of 'the office'. And also of course separate from the working class. For a challenge to this 'three'

class model and to factors which underlie the class structure see: R.S. NEAL: Class and Ideology in the 19th Century, RKP 1972. He proposes a 'five class model' of the 19th century class structure as follows:

UPPER CLASS: aristocratic, landholding, authoritarian, exclusive.

MIDDLE CLASS: industrial and commercial property owners, senior military and professional, aspiring for acceptance, deferential to upper class, individual and privatised.

MIDDLING CLASS: petit bourgeois, aspiring professional, literates and artisans, less deferential than middle class, wanted to remove those privileges they could not hope to share.

WORKING CLASS A: industrial proletariat in factory areas, workers in domestic industry, collectivist and non deferential, wanting government intervention to protect rather than to liberate.

WORKING CLASS B: agricultural labourers, other low paid non-factory urban labourers, domestics, deferential and dependent.

FIVE CLASS MODEL

Authority Structure is the basis of the Social Classes

AUTHORITY	DEFERENTIAL AND CLOSE TO AUTHORITY	NON-DEFERENTIAL PRIVATISED	DEFERENTIAL PROLETARIAN
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Upper Class	Middle Class	Middling Class	Working Class A	Working Class B
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HIGH

LOW

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The central feature of and source of dynamic within this proposed system lies in differential access to authority: tension and conflict are created in the system by high achievement motivation being associated in some groups with poor access to the authority structure of society. This assumption about the possibility of mobility rests on the work of: David McClelland: The Achieving Society 1961. See for example NEALE p.171:

"In my view McClelland has made a prima facie case for a close causal relationship between high achievement motivation and a high rate of economic growth."

Commenting on the class structure, especially in the middle of the 19th century, BRIGGS and SAVILLE op cit; suggest there are three main points to be made:

a marked degree of individual social mobility made class divisions tolerable.

class dividing lines were difficult to draw.

significant divisions within classes were often more important than divisions between classes.

7. Frederick ENGELS: The Condition of the Working Class in England, quoted in BRIGGS and SAVILLE op cit; p.48.

8. BRIGGS and SAVILLE op cit;
9. Quoted in BRIGGS and SAVILLE op cit; p.68.
10. E.P. THOMPSON: The Making of the English Working Class,
Penguin 1968.
11. ibid. p.12.
12. ibid. p.11.
13. ibid. p.11.
14. R.A. NISBETT: The Sociological Tradition, Heineman 1972
Ch.1.
15. Nathen GLAZER: The Rise of Social Research in Europe,
in Daniel LERNER, The Human Meaning of the Social Sciences:
Meriden Books, New York 1964, pp.43-72.
16. ibid.
17. ibid.
18. ibid.
19. ibid.
20. E.P. THOMPSON and Eileen YEO: The Unknown Mayhew, Merlin
Press, London 1971, p.52.
21. A number of accounts of the 19th century 'underworld'
based on such low life reporting have been published.
See for example: Peter QUENNEL (ed): London's Under-
world, Spring Books 1969. Also: Kellow CHESNEY: The
Victorian Underworld, Penguin 1970.
22. See: Steven MARCUS: Engels Manchester and the Working
Class, Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1974, p.4.
23. For an examination of the development of class conscious-
ness in three towns, Oldham, Northampton and South
Shields see: John FOSTER: Class Struggle and the
Industrial Revolution, Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1974.

24. Eric HOBBSBAUM: Introduction to: Frederick ENGELS:
The Condition of the English Working Class in England,
Panther Books 1969.
25. ibid.
26. ibid.
27. Quoted in review article: Brian HARRISON: London's
Lower Depths, New Society No. 266, 2nd November 1967,
pp. 638-9.
28. ibid.
29. H.J. DYOS: The Slums of Victorian London: Victorian
Studies, Sept. 1967.
30. YEO, op cit; p.5.
31. ibid; p.88.
32. ibid; p.21.
33. ibid; p.22.
34. P.E. RAZZELL and R.W. WAINWRIGHT (eds): The Victorian
Working Class; Selections from the Morning Chronicle,
Frank Cass, London 1973. Commenting on the whole enter-
prise they make the following point:

The Morning Chronicle enterprise and the wide public interest in the lives of the poor were symptoms of a complex response to industrialisation ...manifested in parliamentary investigations, surveys by local statistical societies and the social reporting of journalists and novelists; all committed...to reflecting and defining...the condition of England question. The ways in which social problems were being identified and revealed a change in the nature of the problem...The Newspaper and the novel presented the only point of contact many of the middle and upper classes had with the working class...vicarious sources of contact like Labour and the Poor were invested with a crucially informing role...increasingly the call for paternalistic remedy is inseparable from the fear of independent working class activity..."

This point is especially relevant to the main topic of this thesis the Working Men's Club. Since their inception in the 1860's represents an important incur-

sion on the part of the middle classes into the increasingly 'unknowable' working class.

35. ibid.

36. YEO, op cit; p.73.

37. ibid, p.74.

38. ibid. p.75.

39. Morning Chronicle, Letter IV 3rd October 1849, quoted in YEO op cit; p.83.

40. Morning Chronicle, Letter XIX 21st December 1849, quoted in YEO op cit; p.87.

41. YEO, op cit; p.87.

42. YEO, op cit; p.95.

43. Albert FRIED and Richard ELLMAN (eds): Charles Booth's London: A portrait of the poor at the turn of the century drawn from his Life and Labour of the People in London, Hutchinson 1968. Foreword by Raymond WILLIAMS p.xi.

44. Beatrice WEBB: My Apprenticeship, Penguin 1972, p .

45.

46. Quoted in FRIED and ELLMAN op cit; p.xi.

47. YEO, op cit; p.90.

48. A discussion of the more important novels of the period may be found in: Raymond WILLIAMS op cit, Ch.5, The Industrial Novel, p.99-119, where he says that these novels:

"...not only provide some of the most vivid descriptions of life in an unsettled industrial society but also illustrates certain common assumptions within which the direct responses were undertaken. There are the facts of the new society and there is the structure of feeling..."

49. P.J. KEATING: The Working Classes in Victorian Fiction. RKP 1971, pp24-28.

50. *ibid.* p.226.

51. Gareth STEADMAN JONES: Working Class Culture and Working Class Politics in London 1870-1900. *Journal of Social History* Vol 7, part 4, 1974, pp

52. E.P. THOMPSON *op cit*; p.462.

53. STEADMAN JONES *op cit*; p.471.

54. *ibid*; p.499.

55. *ibid.* p.499.

56. *ibid.* p.479.

CHAPTER 5

UNDERSTANDING THE WORKING CLASS:

THE 20TH CENTURY

As has been suggested the study of the industrial working class was an important stimulus to the growth of sociology, especially of the empirical kind said to dominate British sociology. Whether from concern or mere curiosity the working class has never been far from the minds of reformers, politicians, social surveyors and latterly sociologists. The point is aptly put in a review article by Donald ROY:

"...since the middle class emerged from the shadows of feudal castles to build its dark satanic mills it has been fretting about the working class. Concern has been manifested not only by business men, the true bourgeoisie, but by various white-collar auxiliariesSome fear workers will make trouble; others fear they won't. Some strive to tidy up the great unwashed; some strive to see it gets fed....Some want to provide soup lines; others to abolish picket lines..." (1)

In opposition to this concern with the working class the upper class and to a not much less extent, the middle class has been little studied. As Anthony GIDDENS says:

"In Britain elite studies have been remarkable for their absence...there have only been one or two empirical investigations...in contrast to the proliferation of research with the lower levels of the class structure... The meliorists tradition in British sociology uninfluenced by Marxism or revolutionary socialism has served to direct attention to the working class rather than the upper class, towards poverty rather than wealth." (2)

Some part of the explanation of this interest, alongside any social, political or medical threat posed by the working class, must lie with its size and accessibility. Defined simply as manual workers it has never been less than 65% of the population and at various times and places considerably more. Further, lacking any effective means to prevent scrutiny, and despite conventional courtesies:

"My thanks are due...to the slum people themselves, who do not know, and I hope they never will know, how they earned my gratitude." (3)

the working class has always been the willing or unwilling subjects of middle class incursions into their lives, culture and conventions. (4) Research into aspects of working-class life has always been bound up with the 'problem' of poverty (5). From the efforts of local statistical societies, through the work of Mayhew and the classical surveys of Booth and Rowntree, to modern sociology, there is a long tradition of exploring the amount of poverty and responses to it. Simple, head counting research has been recently translated into a more sophisticated examination with the wider aspects of 'poverty'. Born of the recognition that poverty was 'relative' rather than 'absolute' (6), a wholesale rediscovery of poverty in the welfare state took place. This discovery that many people had a considerably less command over scarce resources than they might (7), or were thought to have, was closely associated with research which revealed too, that access to other facilities, designed to relieve inequalities, was also limited to some people (8). Despite the thrust and importance of this type of research, there emerged after 1945 what may be described as a more 'sociological' tradition. With the increasing respectability of sociology and the emergence of the professional sociologist, as distinct from social workers, administrators, and curious statisticians, the working class became the subject of a rather different type of scrutiny and it is this to which I now want to turn.

The First World War marks a watershed in the history, not only of the working class but also in Western Capitalism. Things were never to be the same again. (9)

During this period the working class took on political significance reflected in the growth of the Labour Party to a party of government, and the increasing influence of the Trade Unions. Strikes, depression and agitation culminated in the Labour Government of 1945. (10)

The economic suffering and aspects of working-class culture of the period are perhaps best documented by the novelists and journalists such as George ORWELL and Walter GREENWOOD, direct descendants of the 'low life journalism' of the 19th century. (11)

The approach to the working class developed by social commentators, journalists and latterly sociologists has, in Britain, developed two broad strands or approaches. The first, and by far the most influential, was that which sees one group, the working class, as being vastly different from the rest of society and a necessary subject (or victim) of enquiry. Thus the distinctiveness of the group is established and its way of life described and explained. Here we have the 'working class culture' tradition. Or, in modern terminology, the 'culture of poverty' tradition. That is to say the distinctive patterns of life are a response to the facts of poverty. This approach goes back to the early part of the 19th century. It is carried forward by Mayhew, Booth and Rowntree and picked up in the 20th century by novelists and journalists and passed in the 1920's and 1930's to people like George ORWELL and Walter GREENWOOD. This journalistic tradition gives way in the 1940's, although it re-emerges later in a number of accounts of varying literary merit (12), to a sociological approach which continues to delineate working-class culture until the 1960's.

The other important approach is that of 'working-class consciousness'. The exponents of which in the 19th century were Engels and Marx but linked as it was with prescriptions for action was not well established. It surfaces with Robert TRESSEL, gets ambivalent treatment by George ORWELL and has to wait for the 'radical sociology' of the late 1960's and early 1970's to be given any prominence.

During the Second World War many people from other social classes, and even the 'respectable' working class, came into contact with the 'deprived' working class for the first time. Children, evacuated from city centres to more remote and less populated areas, brought home the 'fact' of poverty in a very real way. Following this the post-war period saw the emergence, not only of the legislative concerns of the Labour Government in setting up the so called 'welfare state', but of a specific kind of academic interest in the working class. I wish at this stage to explore four such studies ranging from about 1945 to about 1955. The emphasis is placed, in the main, on the impact of certain cultural formations and their impact on personality development. (13)

Klein takes these four studies as the basis for her work, augmented by reference to the work of John B. MAYS (14), in the same area of Liverpool's dockland as KERR. She appears to place the areas studied on a continuum based on the degree to which they (the residents) exhibit certain 'desirable' or 'undesirable' traits. Her first, and worst, area was the London slum, Paddington, studied by PANATH in 1944 and SPINLEY in 1949. This she explains

is a 'residual area' from which those who can, go.

Typically she says:

"...the people who live here belong to a group whose education finishes earliest, whose illegitimacy rate is highest, where those who commit most crimes of theft and violence are most to be found...The district has also the highest incidence of the poverty diseases; tuberculosis, venereal diseases, bronchial infections, skin infections, bad teeth..." (15)

Since many of these studies are concerned with the effects of 'sub culture' on personality, a closer look at SPINLEY's work may be illuminating.

She is concerned broadly with the interaction between the individual and his social group. Initially she is seeking to explore the idea that there is a 'core of personality characteristics' held in common by a given cultural group. This idea, when transferred from less complex societies to larger societies gives rise to the idea that there will also be a second, 'sub-cultural personality type'. Her research is thus based on the assumption:

"...the majority of people in society will have certain experience in common, although they will also have other experiences which are shared by a small group..." (16)

Her work was thus an attempt to assess the impact of sub-culture on personality where 'sub culture' is 'very often determined by class'. She sets out to test the hypotheses:

that sub-cultures exist and will have different 'typical' personality types.

there will also be a basic personality type common to the whole culture.

While I am not really interested in her basic propositions -- deriving as they do from an attempt to combine anthropological methods and psychological insights -- what is of interest are the statements she makes about the subject

of her research. The sample, since it needed to reflect two sub-cultures, and hence, two personality types, was selected from London Slum dwellers, and people who attended, and whose children attend, public schools. As Spinley says:

"It may be seen immediately that the groups correspond to the lower lower class and the upper and upper middle class". (17)

Her criterion for selection was education and by implication, 'implicitly included: wealth, property ownership and occupation'. Her methods were, with the slum dwellers, to join a 'settlement' and use 'participant observation' and 'structured interviews with selected informants'. She claims to be 'objective' and at one point she says:

"Subjective impressions of informants may not correspond with objective reality". (18)

and justifies the use of her RORSCHARCH test by saying:

"a slum boy who has a limited vocabulary is not prevented from giving a full picture of his personality."

There follows, as a result of her research the usual list of factors which have become associated with areas of 'social disorganisation'. Spinley lists these factors in a number of propositions, 117 in all, starting with:

1 "The child may have been conceived in or out of wedlock".

and ending with:

117 "He displays certain text book signs of maladjustment".

Between his possible illegitimate birth and his maladjustment lie: the youth of his parents, his birth not planned, sleeps with mother, lack of any feeding schedule, plays in the street, roughly treated at school, starts work early, has days off, drinking and drunkenness, grudges and resentments, etc., etc., etc. (19) From this range of

possibilities a personality type is deduced:

"A basic insecurity; a serious sexual disturbance which is associated with feminine identifications; an inability to form close affectional ties; an absence of a strong and efficient super ego; an inability to postpone satisfaction; a highly sensitive ego and marked narcissistic tendencies; a ready aggressiveness; ...a rebellious attitude towards authority". (20)

Much of this tendentious stuff, sadly still part of the stock in trade of social workers, head masters and others whose job it is to cope with the lower working class, would now form only a minor part, if at all, of an understanding of lower class life. And even SPINLEY, dimly glimpsing future approaches says:

"But the point can be made that whether or not the child is normal within his group he is deviant in the eyes of other social groups because his adjustments and qualities he develops are often inconvenient for these other groups." (21)

However despite this note of caution the slum children:

"...do not have a rich inner life...imaginative activity is meagre and limited...they have little or no creative power, and in general only a lower average intellectual ability.

One might expect these subjects to lose their heads and go to pieces in a crisis...they have a negative and aggressive attitude to the environment...

When faced with new situations the subjects tend to react rapidly, and they do not alter their original impressions of the situation which is seen as a crude whole with little intellectual discrimination of components..." (22)

All of which paved the way for concepts like 'cultural deprivation' and 'compensatory education' a decade or so later. In contrast the middle class child has:

"a strict super-ego, an acceptance of authority, a satisfactory sexual development...conscious feelings of security and confidence.....They are on the whole a stable group of children with considerable spontaneity and a richly imaginative fantasy life...emotional development is amazingly mature....situations tend to be grasped in their entirety with an awareness and understanding of their components..." (23)

From this and the research by PANATH we get the following composite from KLEIN:

"...absence of striving, the intolerance of frustration, inability to wait for gratification...lack of persistence, forethought and effort...neither hope nor fear of consequences govern present behaviour...parents do not systematically control childish impulses...rage, anger, aggression...parents act at any moment as they happen to feel. Nothing is controlled, food, sleep, sexual play...little room for...use of common sense or reason to channel impulses...he feels no guilt when he has done wrong. He has no super-ego...marked lack of creative imagination and aesthetic appreciation..." (24)

and a gentle rebuke for those who might seek to approach the 'problem' from a different direction:

"In my opinion, a whole set of highly desirable values have been brought into disrepute because those who hold or seek to inculcate them are, ...associated with the outsiders contempt for the less privileged... Fairness ('playing the game'), tenderness or aesthetic appreciation in men, intelligence in women, the intellectual interests of minority groups..." (25)

It is interesting to note in passing that she puts much of the blame for the attack on these values onto the mass media.

After this we are treated to 'Ship Street' which, on the whole is 'better' than the previous areas but also has its problems:

"A general feeling of inefficiency when faced with any unfamiliar problem; close emotional attachment to the mother...diffidence in playing the culturally prescribed role, difficulty in forming deep personal relationships... poor resistance to temptation...low moral standards... inability to look ahead and plan...touchiness, moodiness, insensitivity...poor sportsmanship...unreliability in keeping appointments..." (26)

Apart from these odd difficulties things are not too bad:

"...the Ship Street mothers are in firm control of their families, with the men...normally supporting her... within the group of kin there is great generosity... neighbours are very good to one another in crises and emergencies. ." (26)

Here we have shades of the 'working-class culture' which was to emerge in the research of the 1950's. Before then though, almost inevitably, the coal miner had to be studied, and where better than 'up north'? In 1956, after research in the early 1950's DENNIS et al published their study of a Northern mining community, which wished to remain anonymous, in which they:

"...have taken three important formative influences on Ashton's social life-work, leisure and family-and tried to show that the type of approach used in modern social anthropology can expose significant features and inter-relationships in the material..." (27)

In the main their intention is to show that:

"Although Ashton's life is in many aspects influenced by innumerable features...which derive from 'outside' of itself, the principle lines of Ashton's institutions show an inner consistency and structure one with the other." (28)

KLEIN accords the Ashton work a separate chapter on the grounds that Ashton is in the north of England; it is an isolated community which is male dominated, and there is a close relationship between work and other aspects of life, domestic and leisure. The basic feature of Ashton is its close-knit community:

"Ashton families have, on the whole, lived there for two generations at least...they share the same experience - they know about each others streets, places of work, schools and so on. The uniformity and stability of life is characteristically that of a community..." (29)

and the overriding influence is that of coal mining. While the nature of mining is such that the miner enjoys an autonomy and freedom from supervision characteristic of craftsmen and professionals, his work has the additional feature of being both physically demanding and dangerous. This it is suggested leads to a set of attitudes which permeate all other aspects of the community. AS KLEIN puts it:

"This attitude of living for today...Because of the irregularity and insecurity of income saving does not pay...some short term saving does go on...for a sunny and not for a rainy day..." (30)

Or, as DENNIS et al, referring to leisure say:

"The pursuit of leisure in Ashton has two principal characteristics. It is vigorous and it is predominantly frivolous..." (31)

In addition to living for the present the miner's life is characterised by habit, routine and tradition which:

"...reduces the number of choices which have to be made. Choice requires consciousness. If life is disagreeable, choices are likely to be between alternatives none of them especially attractive, and consciousness, in these circumstances, is too often consciousness of danger, squalor, sadness, deprivation. Habit allows people to take their conditions for granted." (32)

Also, there is a 'taboo on tenderness'. Miners are unable to generate an emotionalism which would interfere with the 'roughness' of their jobs. He must:

"...learn to avert his mind from any feelings which would make it more painful for him to pursue his calling." (33)

This 'taboo', KLEIN suggests, is closely linked with another psychological phenomena, 'cognitive poverty'. She points out that even the most sympathetic writers on the working class have noted what appears to be:

"...a stubborn determination not to develop - and not to allow to develop - attitudes which would make for a richer and more interior life." (34)

Conversations between working-class people are sterile and stereotyped with little at the level of principle.

The closeness of the community:

"...turns inward looking...it encourages a way of life that is uncomplicated and clearly defined in structure, but narrow and relatively incapable of absorbing new experiences. When faced with novel ideas or experiences, the urge to select those aspects which are already familiar will be correspondingly greater." (35)

She quotes with approval HOGGART's comments on the 'psychologically frozen' north. HOGGART himself says:

"Most people in the working classes appear, therefore, not merely unfanatic but inidealistic; they have their principles but are disciplined to reveal them in their pure state. For the mist part their approach is empirical; they are confirmed pragmatics." (36)

As KLEIN says, a mistrust of ideas is associated with difficulties in handling ideas, which are expressed in traditional vocabulary and phrasing. This she says is what cognitive poverty is:

"Cognitive poverty describes habits of thinking rigidly, concretely, without speculation, without pleasure, over a narrow range of interests." (37)

These attitudes are reflected in the range, type and extent of leisure activities which seem to be concentrated on routine, undemanding activity: the certain focus of which is the Working Men's Club, the pub and the related dominant activity, betting. Despite this more constructive leisure activities may be seen: brass bands are popular in the north and in parts of South Wales, male voice choirs are some concession to more 'intellectual pursuits'. (38)

However, this is not good enough, for as DENNIS et al say:

"...the essentially frivolous characteristic of leisure in Ashton is closely related to the insecurity, both physical and social, produced in the past and present by coalmining as an occupation in Britain." (39)

If work and leisure are closely related to, and affected by, a set of attitudes deriving from occupational hardship and insecurity, so too are domestic relations and child raising practices. Ashton is male dominated. Leisure is, of necessity, taken outside the home:

"The strong interdependence of the men at work is reflected in their out-of-work and social relations" (40)

and more particularly develops an exclusive character:

"The male group, over the years, develops a set of attitudes and ideas which very deliberately exclude women, children and strangers." (41)

Husband and wife relationships are strictly related to the division of labour in the surrounding society. A man's centre of activity is outside the home where are located the criteria of success and acceptance. While for the wife her home must be kept in good order and meals be provided in good time. Uncomplaining she is a subordinate female in a male dominated world. It is this aspect of the subordination of women which is perhaps the most abiding note of the Ashton study. The miners stern independence and fairly good humoured approach to a dangerous and difficult job are tolerable. The indignities visited on his wife by his virile leisure pursuits and attitudes to home and family are not. The bourgeois suburban family shall be the norm. At one point they say:

"Among the older miners there seems a fairly equal division into two groups. One of these consists of men taking a steady and responsible attitude towards the family...They are not habitual gamblers, and they are not heavy drinkers..." (42)

Virtue is however rewarded:

"From this group come the men entrusted with public position in trade unions, on the council, and other organisations...Of these men the other miners will speak in the main admiringly..." (43)

The authors do also point out that the miners were the first workers to engage in that kind of work and community which determine in large measure the type of relations in the modern urban family. Work isolated from the home, separation from the family for long period and work for a wage only. Allied to a special type of work, these features are accentuated for miners, for whom the family and type of work go back much further than for other workers.

As KLEIN points out the type of working class so far discussed have a 'somewhat exotic air', and it may be of value she suggests to look more closely at what may be called 'more traditional working-class communities'. This marks a change of direction in the study of the working class. From pathology to normality. The work in Bethnal Green (44), now a classic of sociological curiosity about working-class life, focussed on the importance of kinship. Discovered by accident, the authors were:

"...SURPRISED to discover that the wider family, far from having disappeared, was still very much alive in the middle of London..."

Kinship became the centre piece of the study. The account describes the elaborate network of kinship based on the mother daughter tie. Here the norms of reciprocity embedded in the relationships made good sense in coping with the uncertainties of pre-welfare state working-class life. Here was presented, not the negative and restricted aspects of lower class existence but the positive aspects: the culture which emerged was separate from the middle class, it existed in the context of hardship and poverty in which help in adversity and a certain spontaneous gregariousness helped to overcome the more difficult facets of working-class life. The work of the late 1940's and the 1950's produces a picture of what has become the characteristic 'traditional working class'. The picture presented by this research has something of the following. The average member of the working class has limited intellectual horizons, and a lack of curiosity about the world outside the confines of his own local and work community. This community centred outlook gave working

class culture a particularistic quality rooted in collective responses and adaptations. Family life involved extensive kin networks and was firmly based on 'conjugal role segregation'. (46) To a more or less degree it is a male dominated world, women enjoy low status, and even more limitations on personal, intellectual, social and economic development than working-class men. Short term interests were paramount, thrift therefore not encouraged. The world was viewed fatalistically: one accepts one's lot. Events, in the main, are governed by capricious fortune over which there is little control; what happens could happen to anyone. The world is not a place amenable to 'rational' control or manipulation. Such a world view is not conducive to reflection or a profound understanding of things. As HOGGART says:

"Life is making the best of things in this world, is 'rubbing along' as best you can...when it comes to the living of life itself, well 'you know...'..... 'Ah like fair dealings' may seem an inadequate guide to the cosmos...but sincerely said...after a hard life it can represent a considerable triumph over difficult circumstances." (47)

Moreover, such a set of attitudes gives rise to leisure pursuits of a narrow, frivolous and ephemeral kind in which thoughts of tomorrow are submerged in the activities of today. Roles are ascriptive, and status determined by personal qualities, kinship connections for example, rather than by possessions or more universalistic attributes like qualifications. (48)

The work so far referred to was largely descriptive and empirical, although many theoretical assumptions were often not far below the surface. Broadly the thrust of the work-apart, that is, from its central contribution of the rediscovery of the working-class culture, lies in the

notion that certain social formations are closely bound up with other social formations. Work, its nature and or uncertainty, gives rise, not only to typical patterns of leisure and kinship, but also to typical attitudes, or world views. This both at a personal level; that is immediate orientations to action: short term hedonism; and also at a societal level. People in various social positions, it was suggested, would have typical views of the nature of social reality. Induced, it is supposed, by specific social experiences on the one hand, and by specific forms of socialisation on the other. Emphasis here is on both how socialisation proceeds, that is the techniques and social relations involved, and also on what is inculcated by this process. (49). Attention to the resulting relationship between socialisation practices, as emanations of social class, and the resulting personality types, was the concern of Josephine KLEIN, whose work, as she insists, was not intended as:

"...an essay in social class but rather as an essay in social psychology..." (50)

based on the postulates of; 'comparative sociology and cultural anthropology', which were:

"All social groups face some very similar problems of survival. For a way of life to survive over several generations, the attitudes acquired in childhood must be confirmed, or at least not contradicted...by adult life. The experience of adult life is affected on the one hand by the behaviour of other people (both directly in interaction and more remotely by social forces and institutions)." (51)

This seems to be the underlying paradigm within which the research into, and discussion of, the working-class up to the late 1960's took place. Thus by this date a good deal of empirical work about working-class life had been collected although the flurry of interest had, for a while died down, as JACKSON says:

"...the debate on the working class which blazed up, and died down so quickly...Looking back we can see there was an element of fashion in the extent to which the debate was taken up. No doubt our society needs to discover the working class...every three or four years as an exotic thrill: it needs the sense of a rough, sexy, warm, violent world just around the corner." (52)

JACKSON himself seems to have written the romantic epitaph to this world.

From the mid 1960's interest in the working class took new directions. Social changes had made such a picture, as had been so far painted, if not irrelevant, at least questionable. Not only was the description perhaps out of date, but more especially the questions posed and answered by it were too. Interest began to be directed at wider, and to some extent older issues. A major contribution here is the work of GOLDTHORPE et al. (53)

Under the heading: 'The Debate on the Working Class', the issues are presented as follows:

Any discussion about the position of the working class in industrial capitalist society has its origins in the work of Marx and Engels. Marx was not the first to see the importance and increasing numerical strength of the new urban proletariat; what is distinctive in his work is his theory of the evolution of the working class. In particular the growth of working-class consciousness and organised power would result in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. All of this was accounted for by the nature of capitalism itself. Of special significance was the fact that the increasingly disposed petty bourgeoisie would by a process of proletarianisation, join the working class. Thus swollen, the numbers would ensure that revolutionary success would be secure. Thus the breakdown of capitalism would be followed by the communist era. The work of Marx is therefore an important point of reference.

How far have Marx's expectations about the political mission of the working class been borne out by events? To the extent that Marx's position has not been supported by events, was its failure due to factors external to the analysis, or was the analysis at fault?

While fundamentalists would maintain that the basic analysis of the internal dynamics of capitalism was correct it is that:

"the ability of capitalism to simply protract its death agony--through taking advantage of the various possibilities offered for survival by rationalism, imperialism, militarism, the artificial stimulating of demand..."
(54)

has deferred the final decay of capitalism. More critically, friends and enemies have both directed attention to those developments which Marx failed to anticipate. Namely:

the polarisation of classes with the increasing immiseration of the lower classes has not occurred. Rather there has been an increase in all round living standards.

there has been no decline in the numbers of petty bourgeoisie, rather an increase in the numbers in the 'intermediate strata of non-manual salaried employees.

the state has not entirely fulfilled its potential as the coercive instrument of the bourgeoisie. In fact it has limited the power of property and given civil, political and social rights to all regardless of economic position.

property, the basis of stratification for Marx, has given way to other sources of 'cleavage'; income, occupation and education.

finally conflicts between rival groups has become accommodated and institutionalised.

Thus attention became directed at wider, more 'political' issues: how had a quiescent working class been created and maintained in the context of continuing inequalities in the distribution of wealth and power. One approach was to seek solutions within already existing approaches. Thus, what impact has affluence, the welfare state, improved

housing and education had on the traditional way of life delineated by earlier research. One such explanation, possibly the least sophisticated, was the so called 'thesis of embourgeoisement'.

Progressively, it was argued, the working classes had been integrated into the institutional structure of capitalism thereby truncating their revolutionary potential. This was the position when the advanced societies of the West began to recover from the effects of the Second World War. Changes had occurred: mass consumption based on the affluent society had established itself; management was increasingly concerned with human relations; conditions of work differed significantly from the early stages of industrialisation. Further there was a new distribution of the population. Thus we have economic, technological and ecological changes. In economic terms there was to be observed an 'homogenisation' of living standards and income; all classes now possessed consumer durables which led to homogenisation at the cultural level: modes of speech, dress, eating habits, entertainment, leisure, child raising, parental aspirations. The affluent worker had taken over, it was thought, middle class values and styles of life. AS GOLDTHORPE et al say:

"...what is being claimed is another complete reversal of a Marxian prediction: instead of salaried employees becoming homogeneous in all important respects with the proletariat and joining the latter in its political struggle, 'the "proletarian" workers are becoming homogeneous with the white-collar workers and are joining the middle class.' (55)

This embourgeoisement of the working-class was reinforced by changes in technology and management practice. Briefly, in the most advanced branches of industry technology has

reduced the arduousness of work tasks and enlightened management now treats 'workers' in a manner once reserved for 'staff'. In this way the 'alienation' of the industrial worker has been overcome. Additionally, traditional working class communities have been broken up by the construction of new estates and new towns. In this way the networks of kin, patterns of neighbouring and the rituals of communal solidarity, through which working-class culture was transmitted have gone. Here, class-based solidarity gives way to status and status distinctions. This is the basis of the thesis of embourgeoisement advanced by journalists, publicists and not a small number of social scientists.

(56)

The central idea challenging Marx was that the class structure of capitalism was being eroded and the working class in particular was no longer a distinctive group within it. The clearly defined classes of yesterday, conscious groups poised in antagonistic relationship to each other were being replaced by status groups. These were more blurred at the edges, diffuse, and in which differences of power, wealth and influence were marginal. All now share common citizenship and at least equal access to the means of becoming unequal.

While the notion of embourgeoisement was gaining support as an explanation of the evolution of the working class, attention was being directed at a more sophisticated approach to the problem said to be left by the failure of Marx's predictions about the working class. Stimulated by the now famous article by David LOCKWOOD (57), working-class images of society began to be examined to see if

here was the key to the problem of the position of the working class in modern capitalist society. Attention here was directed to related issues. First was the problem of how, in stratified industrial societies, members of various strata develop and hold images of society. Second is the problem of the relationship between objective differences in social situations and the individual's perceptions of these. Answers to these questions would, as Martin BULMER suggests:

"...enlarge our knowledge and understanding of systems of stratification in contemporary Britain, not to provide the basis for philosophical or political prescriptions or refutations." (58)

All-be-it that the problem of consciousness cannot be ignored, a discordant note is struck by WESTERGAARD and RESLER:

"But often the conclusion, expressed or implied, was that something much like the existing pattern of inequality or stratification, to use the anodyne term used by sociologists." (59)

While attention was directed at the facts of inequality and the problem of consciousness and a desire to:

"...understand the nature of working-class industrial and political action." (60)

BULMER is at pains to point out the separation between:

"...the study of images of society and the study of political and industrial class consciousness." (61)

Since it is the contention of this paper that 'embourgeoisement' and its rebuttal; and the problems of class consciousness and inequalities, are the reverse of the same problem: they both seek to answer the same question; what is the position of the working class in modern capitalist society?, they will be dealt with later. I wish now to turn to the important article by David LOCKWOOD.

That the article is important is suggested by BULMER:

"By identifying the community linkages of certain occupations and relating these in a systematic way to variations in class imagery, a breakthrough was achieved by bringing together the study of social stratification, industrial sociology and local community. The establishment of this linkage underlies the influence of the 1966 article." (62)

Taking the position that social consciousness is influenced by a person's immediate social context, LOCKWOOD suggests that 'class' is best viewed from the 'vantage point of one's own milieu'. He then points out that there seems to be two ways in which people see the class structure, either with 'power' or 'conflict' or 'dichotomous' models on the one hand or 'prestige' or 'status' or 'hierarchical' models on the other. While accepting certain variations in imagery, the two models are held; the power or dichotomous models by the working class and the prestige or hierarchical models by the middle class. While the source of the differences in imagery as between the working and middle classes has:

"been accounted for primarily in terms of difference in the industrial life chances and life experiences of manual and non manual worker" (63)

this concentrates on differences between classes at the cost of differences within. Noting that the:

"industrial and community milieu of manual worker shows considerable diversity..." (67)

LOCKWOOD suggests that it is reasonable to expect that there will be marked differences in social images and proceeds to distinguish three types of workers and by inference three different types of 'social consciousness'. The three types of worker are: traditional proletarian, traditional deferential and privatised worker. Each holds a different image of society: power, prestige, and

pecuniary respectively based on differing work situations and community structures. Extracting from LOCKWOOD, in tabular form we get the following:- (65)

PROLETARIAN TRADITIONAL.

Associated with mining:
docking: ship building:
solidarity communities:
isolated from the rest of
society.
High job involvement.
Considerable autonomy in
work.
Pride in 'men's' work:
shared occupational exper-
ience, fraternity, culture.
Work associations carry
over to leisure.
"Existence of such closely
knit cliques of friends,
workmates and neighbours
is the hallmark of the
traditional working-class
community".
Values of mutual aid obliga-
tion to join gregarious
leisure pattern: 'public
and present oriented con-
viviality.'
Social consciousness is
based on 'us'/'them' with
them in power: hence power
model: associated with
strong ties with fellow
workers.

DEFERENTIAL.

Hierarchical
image of society.
Defers to sup-
eriors.
Recognises the
leadership of t
the elite.
The idea of the
'national'
rather than
'class' inter-
ests.
In work contact
with employer:
no strong atta-
chment to fellow
workers.
The essence of
the work situa-
tion is patern-
alistic and
personal.
In small towns:
stable popula-
tion; local
status system.
Person knows his
place.

PRIVATISED.

Work involvement
is slight: work
is a deprivation:
a means to an
end: no cohesive
work groups.
Council or low-
cost estates:
population of
strangers:
isolated home-
centred lives.
Sensitive to
competitive
consumption.

Isolated posi-
tion enables
him to have a
pecuniary
model of soc-
iety: views
relationships
in cash terms:
has a poor
awareness of
belonging to a
cohesive group.

Both these types of traditional workers are to be found in industries and communities which are 'backwaters'. Horizons do not extend much beyond the communities in which they live. They are involved in a mutually reinforcing system of personal influence. Attitudes and behaviour are a consequence of face-to-face encounters and 'belongings'.

Important here is the suggested emergence of a 'new' group based on specific work situations and new types of commu-

nity: this is the 'privatised' worker with his 'pecuniary' model of society. It is worth quoting LOCKWOOD at length here:

"...the privatised worker sees himself as part of a vast income class which contains virtually the great mass of the population...it is a collection of ordinary people who 'work for a living'...in general the 'upper' of 'higher' class is not seen as wielding power or deserving of respect...the central class with which the privatised identifies himself is seen as a relatively new phenomenon...the incorporation of the old middle class into the new working class...The logic of the pecuniary model leads not to class or status consciousness but to commodity consciousness...Inequalities take extrinsic and quantitative rather than intrinsic and qualitative form..." (66)

Lockwood goes on to say that this may be a 'distorted view' of the class structure. For example interaction between lower middle and upper working class is small; this however he attributed to work and residential segregation rather than personal exclusion. Paradoxically the pecuniary model draws less on the economic than the social situation of the isolated and privatised worker: he holds such a view in so far as his social environment supports such an interpretation. Before following the 'images' approach it is worth looking at the sociological antecedents.

Martin BULMER points to a number of formative influences. Theoretically the problem of the relationship between structure and subjective meaning is partly solved by Parson's idea of 'normative orientations' of the actor:

"In his (the actor's) choice of alternative means to desired ends, there is a 'normative' orientation to action. Within the area of control of the actor, the means employed must in some sense be subject to the influence of this independent determinative selecting factor. A knowledge of this is necessary for the understanding of concrete courses of action." (67)

The LOCKWOOD article thus starts from the notion of

'subjective social class' and seeks to explain the meaning of class identification. This represents an important departure from the early work on the working class outlined above, which assumed that there was a homogenous working class which need little further examination beyond description in whatever spirit took the fancy of the researcher. In LOCKWOOD's approach the work of Elisabeth BOTT is important. She suggests that images of the class structure are related to the social environment; that is the network of friends, neighbours and relatives. Thus people base their ideas of social class on their own pattern of relationships. LOCKWOOD quotes BOTT as saying:

"The hypothesis advanced here is that when an individual talks about class he is trying to say something in symbolic terms about his experience of power and prestige in his actual membership groups..." (68)

Here then is the interactional basis for the LOCKWOOD model. As BULMER says:

"The principle of explaining social imagery in terms of the patterns of social relationships constituting social structure was specifically followed." (69)

Additionally the notion of occupational community was also important. Finally work into voting behaviour especially that which stressed the difference between the propensity of the 'proletarian' working class to vote for the Labour Party and that of the 'differential' working class to vote for the Conservative Party.

So much for the origins of what on the face of it looks like a very different approach to the working class. But is it? Criticisms of the LOCKWOOD model will be dealt with below. For the moment it is worth noting that while it was presented as an ideal type, as a basis for further research attention could still be directed, not at an overall, what WESTERGAARD calls 'universalistic class

consciousness' but at the working class community and the nature of working class culture and its role as mediator of the images held. He is concerned with 'communal sociability' as it affects social images not with class consciousness.

Thus, armed with the thesis of embourgeoisement and the ideas of images of society, LOCKWOOD et al set off for Luton to test the hypothesis that the working class was becoming middle class. The choice of Luton, a new and expanding town with a large number of migrant workers, earning high wages in 'new' industries employing new technology; was based on the fact that if the hypothesis failed here, a place most favourable to it, it could be reasonably said that it would fail in places less propitious for the thesis. If, it was argued, the working class were taking on middle class identities three things would follow. First, manual workers were becoming the economic equals of non-manual workers. Second, this change in economic fortune would be accompanied by changes of values in the direction of those said to be held by the middle class. Attitudes to the family and kin would have changed, the extended family would be less important than the nuclear family; orientations to the future would be different, forward planning, especially financial, would be important; leisure would be less gregarious and community based, more home centred and constructive. A neighbourly, collectivist consciousness would give way to an individualistic status consciousness. The springs of action would no longer be collectivist and radical but individualistic and instrumental. Third, with all this would go the mixing, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, of the hitherto separate middle and working class.

These formed the basis of the economic, normative and relational aspects of the thesis of embourgeoisement. Broadly they accepted the economic aspect of the problem, partly accepted the normative component and rejected the relational part. On this basis the broad lines of the embourgeoisement thesis were rejected. However, they do claim to have discovered the 'new' worker to replace the 'traditional' worker of earlier research:

"...while the results...lend little support to the idea of the middle-class worker, they do on the other provide ample material to characterise one manifestation of that hitherto shadowy figure, the 'new' worker." (71)

Who they suggest:

"may prove to be 'prototypical' even if they are not perhaps highly typical of the present time" (71)

The central distinction between the 'old' and 'new' working class was the emphasis of the latter on 'living standards' and their continuing increase. Apart from this however, they were different from their middle class counterparts. Aspirations were higher than those expressed by the 'traditional' working class, but were still bound by the realities of their position as manual wage earners; that is by their 'distinctive class position'. Further, those middle class aspirations were often not held with any sense that could be realistically realised. Attitudes were rarely reflective of a desire for status enhancement in the sense of emulating and seeking acceptance from groups considered to be superior. In more specific terms too, differences were evident. Affluent workers were less likely to discuss finance with wives, nor were they prone to have an 'overall order of priorities in their consumption wants', unlike the non-manuals to which they were compared. With respect to family planning, an index of:

"the greater propensity of our white collar couples to take the long view and to organise their lives consistently with an ordered set of objectives." (72)

the affluent worker showed little difference from other workers. Aspirations for children while only a little less than non-manual workers, the reasons requiring educational success were rarely 'status striving' but pragmatic and instrumental; economically sound and satisfying jobs were required. Such attitudes of the affluent worker should be seen in the light of the images of society held by these workers which, while showing some diversity, showed a marked propensity to regard social class as being primarily a matter of money. Only a small number saw class as being primarily a matter of money. Only a small number saw class in terms of either 'power' or 'prestige'. The style of life of the affluent worker and his refusal to be impressed by status and prestige both derive from his view that he would be the recipient of increasing material advancement as a result of the continuation of economic growth and NOT as the outcome of struggles in the political or industrial world. The consequence of such attitudes are obvious. In an important sentence the authors say:

"As well as throwing light on the formation and focus of respondent's aspirations, considerations of their images of the social order are helpful in understanding their view of possibilities and means of actually achieving their objectives." (73)

These workers saw the class structure as a fact of existence and not a historically created system of domination. It was for many a 'necessary' feature of society. Thus orientations to action was not collective, nor directed against the social order. Class consciousness was much

less in evidence than status consciousness.

In all, after an examination of the work, patterns of sociability and aspirations and social perspectives of the affluent worker, LOCKWOOD et al conclude that there are 'areas of common social experience which remain fairly distinctively working class. Middle-class social norms are not widely accepted nor are middle-class styles of life emulated. These workers have not been nor are they being absorbed into middle-class society nor is this particularly desired objective. Thus is rejected the thesis of embourgeoisement.

What however, has happened in the period of rising affluence, to the working class? This is related to what has happened to some sections of the middle class. As LOCKWOOD et al say:

"...the most significant effect of the economic, industrial and ecological changes of the recent past has been to weaken simultaneously BOTH the traditional 'collectivism' of manual wage earners AND the traditional 'individualism' of non-manual employees." (74)

This 'convergence' has two dimensions. The increase in acceptance of means of collective trade union activity to further economic ends among non-manual workers, instead of their previous commitment to individual effort; and the acceptance of the individual conjugal family and its fortunes as a central life interest by manual workers. This convergence is uneven and does not imply identity. Working class people may be accepting the new ends and aspirations for the family less rapidly than economic collectivism is being accepted by non-manual workers. Equally, the nature of the goals pursued may differ: overwhelmingly economic by the new working class, reflecting

concern with status differentiation by the middle class. This research stands as an important landmark in the history of the sociology of the working class in so far as trends in working-class life, attributable to increasing affluence, security, the welfare state, ecological and technical change, were presented as possible, but not inevitable, pointers to the future. If this were to be the case the working class would not be the focus of a collective consciousness and awareness of their depressed condition - $\frac{1}{3}$ of the sample had no coherent and recordable image of the class structure - leading to attempts to rectify their condition. They would reflect rather accommodative instrumentalism in the context of privatised leisure and family activity. Here industrial and social deprivations would be compensated for by high wages and the family.

Criticisms of this research have been legion, ranging from technical problems such as the size and representativeness of the sample, through accusations that the whole approach was too 'positivist', to fundamental disagreement about the interpretation of the data and its importance for understanding what is happening and may, or will, happen to the working class in modern capitalism. Three important criticisms of the latter type need to be examined here. Gavin MacKENZIE suggests that though the 'prime focus of the project' was an analysis of the class structure the authors were diverted into applying an action theory approach to industrial sociology and lost the opportunity to analyse the class structure of capitalist society:

"which requires an examination of structural inequality and life chances...the crucial fact remains that community and family structure are shaped by the industrial and therefore occupational structures of particular region..." (75)

This almost certainly derives from an emphasis on worker's images of society, rather than on the structured inequalities to which these images are a response. R.L. DAVIS and Jim COUSINS point to the lack of historical considerations with respect to the development of the working class. In comparing the 'new' working class with the 'old', they ignore the relationship between them. As they point out, there has always been a 'new' working class: the question should be a more dynamic historical one:

"...this is how things are at the moment, how did they get to be so..." (76)

rather than an over-typified sociological contrast. Two problems arise from this omission. One is the confusion of oppositional politics with proletarianism. As they point out:

"...the so called traditional community should be associated not with class consciousness and militancy but with political isolation and defeat..." (77)

Further, the identification of instrumentalism as new ignores the kind of bond between a man and his job which has long been a feature of capitalism. This theme is taken up by John WESTERGAARD when he points out that much sophisticated sociology has rediscovered the 'cash nexus' (78). He points out that the manual worker is bound to capitalism by instrumental rewards for his labour. This he suggests can be a brittle bond if capitalism fails to provide the economic compensations. Which, in its turn, can narrow the focus of consciousness and provide the basis for political action. Finally, to quote DAVIS and COUSINS:

"What begins as an attack on the embourgeoisement thesis ends by lending support to a new a subtler form of revisionism...conservative interpretation of the affluent worker...and these conservative interpretations are little different from the originally counterpoised ideas of embourgeoisement, except they are sociologically more complex and convincing." (79)

Despite these criticisms, in the wake of the refutation of the thesis of embourgeoisement on the one hand, and the promising lines of thought opened by the idea of 'images of society' on the other, much subsequent research followed up the logic of these findings. The working class had not been incorporated into the classless society of late capitalism by the adoption of middle class modes and manners: a distinctive working class existed. Moreover, since it existed, its 'position' in capitalist society, even its lack of revolutionary potential and accommodative position, might be plausibly explained by exploring the 'images of society' held by sections of the working class. So much so that in 1975 the symposium, dedicated to this very subject, was edited by Martin BULMER. (80) Republishing the 1966 LOCKWOOD article, the symposium is concerned to criticise, extend, or remodel the original draft.

In the original article LOCKWOOD had suggested that the main source of working-class radicalism would be the isolated, single occupation community; mining, docking, steel-working or shipbuilding. Taking shipbuilding in the Tyneside and South Shields area, COUSINS and BROWN examined this proposition. They point out that, in opposition to LOCKWOOD, isolated communities, dependent on one source of employment or a single employer, are at a disadvantage in terms of opposition. There will, they suggest, be identity with the employer and his achievements, and 'constraints on rocking the boat' (a more than opposite

metaphor in the context of shipbuilding!). Militancy will be directed at allocation of rewards, work demarcation and differentials rather than the employer. This is possible due to the fragmented nature of shipbuilding. The nature of work is thus recognised, in contrast to LOCKWOOD who seems to have missed this small empirical point. The hierarchical occupational structure as between craft, non-craft and different unions, labour market and position in the work cycle, prevented occupational solidarities, and:

"the social life of the yard was based on these differences." (81)

As for the presence of an occupational community, orientations to pub and club were evident but so too was much home centredness and a greater equality between the sexes than, for example, was described by DENNIS et al in mining. Though they do point to the permeating influence of the media between the 1950's and the 1970's as accounting for some of this difference. However, they do recognise a 'distinctive way of life' but are reluctant to attribute it to any 'specific industrial basis'.

Acknowledging this contrast between work and community they suggest there may be more than three images of society as suggested by LOCKWOOD. In fact, the research confirmed the view of a diversity of images of society. From 14 different responses, 5 broad images of society could be distinguished. The perception of the possibility of social mobility appearing to increase with the complexity of the model of social class which individuals held. The ship builder's view of society was characterised by 'paradox' rather than 'pattern'. Only $\frac{1}{3}$ held a two-class model of

the class structure, many had elements of all of LOCKWOOD's types, while many of the workers used different conceptions in different contexts. The ideal type proletarian was rarely found, there was no structure to images of society, not any unambiguous view of the class structure. However, the writers did recognise some 'latent proletarianism' though this was not given prominence; the number, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the sample, with a dichotomous view of society, could be seen as large. Many of the respondents saw themselves as separate from those in authority, the landed and the rich. They further suggest that the increasing homogenising of the work will possibly lead to further proletarianisation. However, their main conclusion is that those factors which LOCKWOOD saw as supporting proletarianism are a source of differentiation and division; and the view of the social world held by these men is characterised by ambiguity and confusion.

This point about working-class images of society, in contrast to the more clear cut images proposed by LOCKWOOD is indicated also, by BLACKBURN and MANN in their sample of workers in Peterborough. (82)

Pointing out that much knowledge of workers' ideologies derives from adding together a number of fairly homogeneous groups of workers: Ashton, Gosforth, Luton, they suggest that this has led to two conclusions. On the one hand is the fact of overall diversity of views, while on the other is that within this there is a degree of sub-cultural homogeneity in workers' images of society. LOCKWOOD indicates the possibility of overall working-class consciousness as composed of distinct and internally cohesive

'deferential', 'privatised' and 'proletarian' sub-cultures.

This they point out ignores the fact that:

"all workers within capitalism are placed in such contradictory real situations that it is unlikely that they can develop isolated and cohesive sub-cultures of the kind suggested by LOCKWOOD...the social context of most workers is highly diverse in terms of the occupational background and the background of those they meet and the types of enjoyment available in the area..." (83)

At the same time however, they are subject to the same structural constraints of their class position. Thus they argue the 'Affluent Worker Study' ignores the essential dialectical relationship between capital and labour.

Their conclusion from a diverse sample of workers from a variety of firms and 275 jobs is that:

"it seems clear that pragmatism, in the sense of response to the specific substance of an item, (the research was conducted with a 9 item scale on a left/right continuum designed to tap images of society) possibly mixed with confusion far outweighed ideology...in the consciousness of our sample ideology played little part..." (84)

Right wing ideologies appeared to be most consistent, that is, as PARKIN (85) suggests, the values which are continually reinforced by the dominant value system. However, in the main ideologies were inconsistent and confused and had low salience. Commenting on this the writers say:

"no...systematic images are possible for the worker who is part of industrial society." (86)

Their confusion derives from the confusion of the reality which confronts them: confused images are attempts to grapple with this confusion:

"they do not see the relevance of political ideologies concerned with social changes in areas more remote than the stratum they know" (87)

The workers' ideological perspectives relate to their own lives and to the inevitable constraints of the existing social order, not to intellectual political ideas. Once again the drift of the evidence is to a working class

which accepts rather than challenges the existing social order; their typical images and ideologies derive from that acceptance. Michael MANN has drawn attention to the changes which have taken place in working-class life since 1945. (88) It is as well at this point to look a little more closely at this since it is easy when discussing 'consciousness', 'images of society' and the like, to overlook exactly what group of people and what social relations are being explained. In the New Society article MANN deals with two related issues. The present economic and social position of the working class, the achievements of the working-class movements, and the political (revolutionary) potential of the working class.

On the economic and social position MANN notes that it is no longer possible to place working-class life within a physical context as was the case with many of the classical studies of the working class. Additionally, deprivation, and what were said to be its associated institutions, for example elaborate kinship networks, have, apart from small pockets of poverty among the sick and the old, all but disappeared. MANN makes the observation:

"Such a basic level of security of life is without question the major achievement of modern society." (89)

Although it is worth noting that this 'achievement' represents no shift of wealth from rich to poor since it is a self financed insurance scheme which leaves untouched the basic differences between the working class and the middle class. And the maintenance of these differences makes for cultural continuity. The traditional differences have however become 'blurred' by the penetration of lower-middle class jobs by working-class females. However, despite the presence of a 'working class', distinctive

sub-groups rarely form:

"...for the vast majority of workers the vageries and uncertainties of the labour market mean that distinctive sub-groups can not really form within the working class." (90)

There is neither an 'aristocracy of labour' nor a 'lumpen proletariat' in Britain. Certainly, MANN suggests, 'underdog consciousness' exists but the diversity of working class experience is diversity around a 'core'. This 'core', the experience of urban workers and their families, is as follows:

a factory worker in a firm employing more than 500 employees.

heavily unionised.

labour voting.

entirely dependent on wages.

most property is in the form of household goods.

they are the sons of manual workers with a 1 in 4 chance of becoming non-manual.

highest income comes in his early thirties.

wives are more often working and there is a greater sharing of household chores.

less adultery and divorce and more television!

although some 1 in 20 of their children are likely to go to university, for most the chances of social mobility are slight.

they do not mix socially with the middle class and: 'their experience of the wider social structure is limited'. Their experience is entirely bounded by their class.

in consequence their views about society are incoherent.

suspicion, antagonism, hostility and some consciousness characterise class relations but the scale is limited.

Thus, on the point of political potential MANN claims that this too is limited. Mainly to bargaining with employers. Radical, or even reformist change, does not lie within the working class. The most significant achievement of the British working class, or at least its major instit-

utional expression, trade unions and the Labour Party,
is:

"the inalienable right of the British worker to work
less hard than the workers of any other major industrial
country." (91)

and the workers, in situ, as it were have shown marked
ingenuity in:

"smoothing out the work pace..."

This MANN suggests has resulted in a pleasant, broadly non-
violent social atmosphere because:

"...it (the British working class) has built the best,
most civilised defences for its communities against
the exploitation which is capitalism..." (92)

and, although:

"...its own party is beginning to use the power of the
state against the old compromises and asking for further
sacrifices...It is doubtful whether in response the core
of the working class can generate alternative solutions."
(93)

In his earlier work, which is more theoretical, MANN
addresses himself to a more comprehensive assessment of
the position of the working class in Western capitalist
liberal democracies. (94) His primary aim seems to explain
the evident differences between the working classes of
France and Italy and America and Britain. Approaches seem
to lie within either 'the end of ideology' idea or versions
of Marxism.

In the 'end of ideology' the suggestion is that there has,
in mature capitalism, been a compromising of class interests
and the institutionalisation conflicts. Though some
conflicts may be inherent in capitalism, thus controlled,
they may function to increase the economic surplus for
distribution and the working class will be reasonably content.
The balance of conflict will decline when extra industrial
elements; presence of traditional elites, the continuing

importance of religion, migration of rural populations to urban areas, also decline. These elements are less pronounced in Britain (England) and America than in France or Italy, hence the less violent and politically conscious working classes in the former. This general approach, 'end of ideology', seems to underpin most of the sociological research in to the working class. MANN himself adopts a "modified form of the 'end of ideology'", in which he rejects the idea that it is an inevitable part of capitalist development, but accepts, on the basis of the evidence, the general outline. He arrives at this conclusion via an examination of the Marxist position in the light of recent, comparative sociological research.

The terminology of the Marxist approach differs from the 'end of ideology' in so far as 'capitalism' is substituted for 'industrialisation'. But, the root of the debate lies in consciousness. The origins of proletarian consciousness lie in the experience of the contradiction between the individualistic relations of production and the collective forces of production endemic in capitalism. Capitalistic relations are individualistic while proletarian power is collectively based and experienced. MANN dismisses the idea of 'false consciousness' - the split between subjective awareness and objective conditions - and suggests that consciousness has four elements:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| IDENTITY: | definition of self as working class and playing a distinctive role, along with others, in the productive process. |
| OPPOSITION: | the perception that capitalism and its agents constitute an 'enduring opposition'. This reinforces identity and vice versa. |
| TOTALITY: | the acceptance of the first two as the defining characteristic of one's total situation in society. |

ALTERNATIVES: a conception of another type of society,
a goal to strive for in the conflict with
opponents.

As MANN makes clear, the British working class lacks one,
if not two of these: normally identity and opposition are
present, totality and alternative are normally missing.
The political leaders of the British working class rarely
talk of alternatives, in fact they help to reconcile
workers to the existing social order. Thus the worker
continues to be compromised by capitalism: in which aims
are achieved by an 'instrumental segmented structure'.
Each segment, family, politics, work, leisure is regulated
by the underlying laws of the market. This segmentation
militates against consciousness since connections have to
be made between each structure. A process only likely to
take place when contradictions in one segment spill over
into others - unemployment and reduced income will affect
both leisure and family life and may result in heightened
consciousness - this normally does not take place and
lower class world views reflect this segmentation. The
separation of work and non-work, money and control (in the
work place), industrial and political activity. The
worker:

"...grasps neither the totality of society nor alternative
structures." (95)

Further, he gradually lowers his aspirations and any sign
of consciousness is destroyed by economism:

"Normally confronted by an employer who will budge on
economic issues but not on control issues, the worker
takes what he can easily get and attempts to reduce
the salience of what is denied him. Though this leaves
him partially alienated, it does not place him, as it
were 'outside' capitalism, but rather comprised by it."
(96)

This MANN refers to as 'hegemonic capitalism' and uses
this as the basis for his "modified version of the 'end

of ideology' theory". (97) In Britain and America this process has gone further than elsewhere, indeed:

"indeed the more employers behave like true capitalists, the securer will they rest in their beds! It is in those countries where employers have been least willing and able to act within the narrowly capitalist frame of reference that the working class has come closest to achieving revolution...it is in the most capitalist countries that the working class has become most reformist...It is the growth of capitalist hegemony that has produced a decline in socialist ideology in certain countries..." (98)

which locates the major determinants of contemporary class consciousness outside the structure of capitalism.

MANN concludes that, despite the emphasis of a number of writers on the essential fact that:

"...workers are still excluded from ownership and control of the instruments of production..." (99)

and the notion of 'conflictual participation'; or even the attention drawn to the 'new' working class, as all having within them the possibility of revolutionary consciousness:

"working-class consciousness is unlikely to develop in most capitalist societies...it seems rather unlikely that the proletariat carries in itself the power to be a class for itself." (100)

The reason for this is the inability of the working class to surmount the hegemony of mature capitalism and develop a consciousness composed of identity, opposition, totality and alternative. Far from this being likely there is the paradox that, while the 'traditional' working class is (was) strong on identity and opposition it is (was) weak on totality and alternative, the 'new' working class is strong on totality and alternative it is weak on identity and opposition (101) which:

"...gives the new working class the same quality of utopianism, the same failure to translate a mixed consciousness into a consistent series of actions..." (102)

Frank PARKIN addresses himself to another dimension of the problem:

"...the relationship between dominant and subordinate classes...the relationship is essentially exploitive and confronts the dominant class with serious problems of social control." (103)

After locating the 'backbone of the class structure' namely the 'occupational order', which is also the basis of the reward system and the inequalities associated with the division of labour - lack of power, status and prestige, and economic worth - he suggests that a further source of inequalities is the ownership of property. This sees economic inequality as of primary importance and leading to the central issue:

"Inequality in the distribution of rewards is always a potential source of instability. Because upper, relatively advantaged strata are generally fewer in number... they are faced with the problem of control over the latter. One way of approaching the issue is to ask not why the disprivileged often rebel...but why they do not rebel more often than they do." (104)

The main source of stability and control is the degree to which the upper class can persuade those with the lowest rewards of the legitimacy of relative positions within it. This is, as PARKIN points out, not done by specifying specific occupations as deserving of specific rewards, nor by reference to importance or function, but rather by designating certain 'qualities' of occupations, mainly those qualities of the occupations of the dominant group, as deserving of reward. Thus manual work is less deserving than non-manual work and so on. Put more broadly control and stability will be achieved in proportion to the degree to which 'power', deriving from control of the economic order can be translated into 'authority' (105) This conversion of power into authority will result from such devices, not necessarily devised by the upper strata, as

social mobility (106), resignation and acceptance (107) by the subordinate groups, education, the influence of religion (108). Additionally there may be the generation of a values system in which social reality is interpreted in terms of chance thereby ruling out any control over possible social change.

However, to return to the central issue that of the 'legitimacy' of the position of the dominant group. PARKIN suggests that we may look at the 'normative order' as a number of competing meaning systems and distinguishes three. These are:

The DOMINANT value system, the social source (109) of which is the major institutional order. This is the moral framework which promotes the endorsement of existing inequality.

The SUBORDINATE value system, the social source or generating milieu of which is the local working class community. This is a moral framework which promotes ACCOMMODATIVE responses to the facts of inequality and low status.

The RADICAL value system, the source of which is the mass political party based on the working class. This is a moral framework which promotes OPPOSITIONAL interpretations of class inequality.

Response to the dominant value system may be either deferential or aspirational but in either case:

"...the subordinate value system restricts man's consciousness to the immediacy of a localised setting and the dominant value system encourages a consciousness of a national identity..." (110)

In these terms the work on images discussed above has tended to concentrate on what PARKIN has called the 'subordinate value system' as a source of images within localised work and community settings. However, PARKIN's work is superior on at least three counts. First it offers some explanation of the mechanism by which images are developed as responses to specific experiences of work, community and

the facts of inequality. Second it helps to explain the confusion, ambiguity and incoherence of many of the images revealed by the research:

"Attitudes towards the social order held by any members of this class (the subordinate class) would be likely to reflect the influence of this mix..." (111)

That is the 'mix' of the three 'meaning systems'. As to which will be called upon at any time will tend to be a product of the 'salience' of either value system for the situations. Issues of general applicability will be viewed through the dominant value system. More localised issues will draw on the subordinate value system. Finally it offers some explanation of the development of the accommodative, non-revolutionary non-conscious working class revealed by such research as that of MANN. If the source of radical consciousness is the mass political party, then changes in, or the decay of, this influence on meaning systems would have consequences for alternative meaning systems. As PARKIN says:

"One likely consequence of such an occurrence is that the subordinate value system would increasingly provide the framework of social meaning among the working class. That is, interpretations of, and responses to, class inequalities would be weighed more heavily in the direction of adaption and accommodation. The realities of class would continue to be highly salient to man's construction of his social world; but the response to these realities would be bounded by the moral categories of the underclass community and the instrumental collectivism of the trade union movement." (112)

So far too, this model may be superior on a fourth count. If the notion of legitimacy and authority are allied to the means by which this is achieved - the control of the institutional order - we can construct a useful model which may go some way to further explaining the position of the working class perhaps on the following lines. Arising from the control of the forces of production there will

emerge two or more classes providing self-contained systems for its members. Since those who own the means of production will have 'power' they will seek to legitimise their position, not through physical coercion, but by control of the institutional framework, especially the means of direct control; law and government, but also the means of 'mental' control'; education, religion, the mass media. Despite these efforts, the contradictions deriving from the specific situations of the subordinate group, will be evident to the subordinate group, and various challenges or accommodations will be made in the shape of either radical or oppositional value systems, or subordinate or accommodative value systems.

This accommodation may, perhaps, be illustrated as follows, Central to the dominant value system of capitalism is the pursuit of individual interest: 'possessive individualism'.

(113) Individual effort will be rewarded. However, the obvious contradiction between this, and the fact for most of the subordinate groups, effort, is scarcely rewarded, despite individual effort. This rather challenges then the basic assumption. The pursuit, therefore, of 'individual' interests may take a 'collective' turn. This may explain such working-class institutions as: the Labour Party, trade unions, Co-operative Societies, Working Men's Clubs and possibly the elaborate kinship networks found among some working-class communities. None of which is a challenge to the existing social order.

Additionally, the possibilities of mobility may encourage individual striving and/or syphen off the more able members of the subordinate group to join the lower end, at least, of the representatives and agents of the dominant

strata: teachers, civil servants and the like.

Unless we forget the issues involved, and before we go on to discuss alternative approaches, an appraisal of the debate so far seems to be called for.

Having identified two broad traditions in the analysis of the working class: the 'lets look at the working-class response to their poverty' or more lately, 'lets look at the response of the working class to their relative affluence'; and the 'consciousness of common experience' leading to political 'action' as opposed notions of the analysis of the working class, it may be useful to survey the argument so far. Broadly, the bulk of research into the working class since 1945 has, despite often major differences of emphasis, been within the 'lets look at the working class and their response to poverty/affluence' paradigm. Following from this we may identify the following phases:

1945-1955: the continuing tradition. Here, at worst is the pathological aspects of the working class or, perhaps at its best, the romantic aspects: warm hearted gregariousness with kin and community centred loyalties. A working class characterised by 'consciousness' and potentially for action, or, in opposition to this, characterised by a fatalistic acceptance of the social order.

1955-1960: the embourgeoisement debate. Under the impact of affluence, the welfare state and the evident break up of old, traditional working-class communities speculation arose as to the final absorption of the working class, or at least the more affluent part of it, into the middle class.

1960-1965: rejection of embourgeoisement. The important research by LOCKWOOD and GOLDTHORPE et al into the class position of the affluent worker.

1965-1975: working-class images of society. This followed the LOCKWOOD ideal typification of three basic 'images' of society and social reality said to be held by the working class and his postulate of the emergence of an economic, accommodative working class. Withdrawn from community this type of worker represents the segmented aspects of life in modern,

mature capitalism. During this period too, much research on 'images' of society held by the working class revealed the confused, incoherent, ambiguous images held by this group.

1973-; the approach becomes increasingly theoretical. Though this may appear to be a shift in emphasis the question being asked - MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN describe this as: "the problematic bond which ties the lower class to British society.": is much the same. What is the relationship of the modern working class to the society to which they belong. The answer is still looked for in the working-class way of life; though the emphasis is no longer on working-class culture. PARKIN points to the emergence of an 'accommodative, subordinate value system' within the working class which aids adjustment to subordinate status and acceptance of the unequal reward system. MANN suggests a 'modified end of ideology theory' according to which the working class, either 'old' or 'new' have no true consciousness.

These are all, if we examine conclusions, versions of the 'accommodative' approach to the working class.

These views have not gone unchallenged. As early as 1970, John WESTERGAARD (114) criticised the affluent worker studies and drew very different conclusions from those formulated by LOCKWOOD et al. The counter approach derives from a much less vigorous, in terms of a paradigm for research, branch of working-class studies, rooted in the work of Marx and Engels. Namely, the consciousness of common experience school. This approach is, perhaps unfortunately, closely bound up with 'action'. Perhaps its most distinguishing feature, since most of the research so far discussed recognises some elements of consciousness. However, this approach places emphasis on the potential for action deriving from consciousness. MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN (115) start by pointing to the fact that in dealing with the working class and the society of which they are a part, most writers insist on the 'inherently limited nature of the normative opposition to dominant values'. This is so because workers are unable, on their

own account, to produce alternative visions of a different type of society and social relationships. The two most important contributions to the debate, those of PARKIN and MANN:

"...acknowledge the potentialities for radical action, but insist on the necessarily limited scope for normative opposition...which can only be transcended by 'radical agencies' external to the working class..." (116)

Without the help of party intellectuals or the representatives of organised labour most working class people are not capable of fully comprehending their position. Thus we have a working class, the research on which stresses:

the limited 'economism' of the workers' understanding of class.
therefore a lack of 'true' consciousness.
with a contingent contradictory view of class.
which is permeated by dominant values.
and bound by the premises of capitalist society. (117)

All of which ignores, according to MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN,

"...quite significant elements of thought and action of British workers and to overstate the limitations of lower-class opposition to dominant values." (118)

They suggest that too much emphasis has been on evidence from answers to certain types of question about the numbers of classes, do classes exist, etc. This misses the point. Feelings of subordination, discrimination, unfairness and hostility are the essence of class opposition. They suggest that at least some expression of this opposition may be found in sit-ins, stay-downs, work-ins, and the like. Some 'counter ideology' is involved to the extent that:

"they implicitly involve some claim by the workers to have rights over the assets of the firm regardless of the fact that they do not own them in the formal sense." (119)

Similarly squatting and rent strikes propose alternatives to the dominant values. One such rent strike in Barking was the subject of research into the possibility of the

presence of such a 'counter culture'. They present data which suggests that some ideas in opposition to dominant values exists. Not only is an oppositional and often aggressive attitude to the premises on which society is based present, but part of this opposition is a 'glimmering' of other principles around which society may be ordered. For example, in their research on attitudes to property they found that 'need' was often given as a principle for its distribution rather than mere 'ability to pay'. Since in recent times, some would say never, the Labour Party nor the Trade Unions has breached equality of access to property - or anything for that matter other than the right of access to unequal on some meritocratic basis - the source, in contrast to PARKIN's idea, of such radical ideas must derive from other than the mass working-class organisation. MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN suggest that this is:

"...the position of the worker AS worker in capitalist society..." (120)

Although they do agree that despite this, and the presence of some 'oppositional' ideas:

"...at most times and places, most members of the working class put up with or simply do not think about wider social structures of power and influence." (121)

Such pragmatism is a powerful binding force but unstable since 'conformity without commitment' may increase the attractiveness of values more congruent with experience. One problem emphasised in research is that the working class is said to be unlikely to take action because of a persistent inability to 'grasp alternatives intellectually':

"...cognitive, even verbalised, understanding of class inequality as a prerequisite of class activity runs through the conceptual and empirical analysis of the class attitudes of the British working class." (122)

But, this may not be necessary, since men can set about changing the world before they all fully understand it. Thus MOORHOUSE suggests there may be three groups within the working class with three types of consciousness: a radical leadership, a small number of class-conscious workers and a larger proportion of discontented and alienated workers. One source of the circumscribed world view of the working class is their insistence, revealed by research, on what is called the 'money model' of society. Differences between individuals and groups are viewed as being ONLY pecuniary differences. Even here the matter is only dimly understood. Little thought is given to sources of income, for example, income from work, property, investment. Nor is there any awareness as to how these differences are taken up into other institutions, legal, political and social. This puts the richness and subtlety of British society beyond the grasp of the lower classes. The 'money model' is dismissed by many sociologists as being 'simplistic', 'broad', 'meaningless', 'destructured', or 'emphasising social equality rather than inequality'. As MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN point out:

"Since a great deal of sociological effort has been expended on showing that 5% of the population still owns 75% of the personal wealth, we are inclined to think that the lower classes have grasped rather well the main structural fact about British society and also their allotted place in it." (123)

Statements about money are statements about power and are not an inferior appreciation of social class and represent an 'accurate subjective perception of the objective reality of the class system of Britain'. What then of 'images' of society? Even LOCKWOOD and GOLDTHORPE et al show that their respondents saw the 'top classes' as

qualitatively different. This allied to the emphasis on money predisposes a class structure as divided rather than as a continuum: akin in fact to the much discussed 'us' 'them' dichotomy. While the:

"...majority view the class system in Britain as very much a dichotomised one..." (124)

the evidence from the Barking survey suggests that for some, class perceptions vary, often quite widely, over time; sufficient to cast doubt on the idea that for this group class images help to give meaning to the social world. For this group class has no salience. However, there was a sufficiently large group, the members of which, showed considerable stability with respect to relations involved in social class rather than the terminology with which these relations were expressed.

MOORHOUSE concludes that there is sufficient evidence of national majorities who believe that class conflict is important and that there is a class struggle in Britain. This:

"...hints at perception which does see class as a basis of social action in which the clash of classes could be seen as a source of social change." (125)

Also, those who agree with terms like 'conflict' or 'struggle' go beyond the dominant values which tend to 'down-grade' the significance of class, except in its aristocratic, 'service tradition' sense or its meritocratic, 'talent and success' sense. Few agencies:

"...promote a view of the class structure as composed of classes in conflict and competition." (126)

It is therefore, despite the anodyne of the working class as 'accommodated' to their position in capitalist society, possible to suggest that a source of consciousness and

meaning exists for lower class people. This is their direct experience of work, an unequal share of wealth and the concomitant lack of power. The ensuing discontent may lead to frustrated co-operation, alienation and a confused and contradictory and fatalistic view of society. Or it may lead to the development of a 'counter ideology' as a source of action.

Similar views were put forward by John WESTERGAARD in 1970 in his critical review of three, then recent, studies of aspects of working-class life. (127) The studies in question were those of RUNCIMAN, MCKENZIE and SILVER, and LOCKWOOD and GOLDTHORPE et al. (128) Each of these studies, WESTERGAARD points out, draws broadly similar conclusions from different types of data: continuing inequalities of class - that is, of economic situation - produce only limited resentment among manual workers. This is brought about by a belief that inequalities have been reduced, and limitations on points of comparison. This produces a picture, as has been discussed above, of the secular, pragmatic worker locked into family and leisure and the pursuit of consumption. His political ideas are at best blurred at worst incoherent; still held down by the limitations imposed by their class position. Despite the overwhelming evidence for this view WESTERGAARD seeks to challenge it. Not so much the 'intrinsic quality of the evidence', although this could be questioned, but the 'interpretations' which have been put on it. As he says:

"In essence my argument is that the images of working-class consciousness put forward are an incomplete representation even of the evidence from which they are drawn...the authors have...obscured the ambiguous totality of the world views (of the working class)...they show insufficient sensitivity to the contradictions of working class consciousness and especially the latent potential for change suggested by these contradictions of working class consciousness and especially the latent potential for change suggested by these contradictions." (129)

The main target of WESTERGAARD's attack is the idea of the 'instrumental' orientations to work and politics said to characterise the working-class 'Weltanschauung'. This he says is seen as being new and necessary for the developing 'privatisation' of the affluent worker. But, he goes on to point out:

"...this 'monetary orientation' seems to amount to something remarkably like a recognition of the 'cash nexus' which Marx identified as the residual binding force of capitalist society well over one hundred years ago." (130)

This 'cash nexus' is essentially brittle and may break because it is ONLY a cash nexus: having broken there will be nothing else to bind the worker to acceptance of his situation with consequences quite different from those predicted by the 'reformist', 'end of ideology school'. Widening the debate and concentrating the criticism WESTERGAARD goes on to make the following points:

among the working classes 'social criticism' can and does co-exist with 'social apathy'.

much dissatisfaction with income was evidence in the samples which formed the basis of the studies. Economic and social discontent is more widespread than can be discovered by social survey techniques.

a 'counter ideology' of criticism co-exists with a 'practical everyday acceptance of established institutions.

the British working class is not seething with rebellion but this counter ideology is not as fragmentary nor as negligible as some interpretations infer.

dissillusion with, and limited support for, traditional working class organisations, need not be looked at as part of accommodation and lack of radicalism; but a recognition that the 'incorporation' of these institutions has rendered them no longer capable of pursuing working-class interests. A point reflected in the shift of strike activity to newer industries of affluence, and the emergence of shop floor organisations as the focal points of collective bargaining and industrial action.

WESTERGAARD concludes:

"The essential constraints of his (the worker) life are, as they were before, his permanent dependence on the sale of his labour; his subordinate position in the market, at work; and more widely his absence of practical prospects of self advancement, promotion, and regular and personal increments in earnings related to seniority." (131)

This is not to over emphasise the worker's employment situation as a source of tension but to guard against the too ready assumption of a sharp separation between work and non-work, which, in the context of the liability of the 'cash nexus' to 'strain and severance' if threatened, may be drawn together as sources of active discontent. These points are followed up in more detail by WESTERGAARD in 1972 (133), and in even more detail by WESTERGAARD and RESLER in 1975 (134).

This latter work does not address itself to theoretical issues but seeks to outline the essential character of inequalities, and explain in Marxist terms the mechanics by which these features persist. These inequalities are examined in terms of economic inequalities, inequalities of power and inequalities of opportunity. For each of these they produce a massive and comprehensive data to show that the overall structure of inequality in capitalist society has remained the same despite the emergence of social democracy. On the whole the book is an attack on the idea that, capitalism has been tamed, inequalities - other than

those necessary to mobilise talent - have been removed, and the working class is happily accommodated to the world created for them by the efforts of the trade unions and the Labour Party. Finally, while the bulk of the book is concerned with 'objective' class inequality a final section discusses 'subjective' responses.

They question the assertion that, within the working class, a broadly based radicalism is of limited possibility.

Despite being fragmented by occupation, region, community, craft and industry there is evidence of a broadly-based class sentiment; not necessarily bound by the particularism of work and community, though its expression may take different forms than hitherto since traditional working-class organisations are no longer able to express the discontent, alienation and frustration which is at the root of working-class consciousness. To quote from this important book:

"Citizens in form they are subjects in fact: the subordinate majority in a society whose routine roles work to their disadvantage. The institutions of property, profit and market are the prime sources of the disabilities which go with rank-and-file work in Western societies.. the crucial component in the life circumstances of the mass of wage earners is their dependence on market sale of their labour..." (135)

Perhaps a final word should go to a proposer of the opposite position and a critic of WESTERGAARD and RESLER. Michael MANN points to the theoretical weakness of the work and goes on to criticise the simple duality of 'reform' or 'revolution' which the authors used. He says the book is not about class. The only attraction to the concept which is given is in the dichotomy between class in itself, the hard core of objective inequality; and class for itself, subjective awareness of this. Marx, on whose ideas such a

distinction is made, did not mean this MANN claims.

Marxian analysis can not decide that a class exists objectively and not subjectively. Thus:

"This is indeed a contribution of Marxism to sociology in general; that a class is an actual and potential historical actor, structured by macro-economic tendencies into threatening organisations. Thus the most damaging critique of Marxism is not one which would show that some redistribution had occurred, but one which would show that macro-economic tendencies produced working-class organisations which were factually implicated in the market structure of capitalism, and therefore could not actually (as opposed to rhetorically) challenge it. This kind of argument is neither 'objective' nor 'subjective' but rather concerns what Giddens has called the 'structuration of class'." (136)

The foregoing account of the approaches to the analysis and understanding of the contemporary working class has followed, as closely as possible the work of sociologists on the grounds, not that literature and social surveys have not provided insights, but that it is here, in sociology, that we find the most extensive attempts at both description and analysis. It has been the intention to show that, while diverse in emphasis, locale, methodological and theoretical rigour, and often separated in time, most sociological accounts share a common subject matter in the under class, and attempt to answer, overtly or covertly, explicitly or implicitly, the same questions. In essentials, fascinating as the descriptions of working class life are, it is this question which is of the most sociological importance. Put simply this is: what is the position of the working class in modern Britain? Put more broadly the question becomes: in the context of inferior rewards for, undesirable definitions of and increasing meaningless in, manual work, how and why do large numbers of people accept their positions of inferiority and subordination? Here

two components of the general issue may be distinguished: what social mechanisms exist to inculcate a sense of inferiority and to maintain acceptance of it, and what social formations, in the shape of culture and institutions, emanate from this acceptance?

It is perhaps not too sweeping to say that early research, up to say the mid 1960's, as primarily concerned with the latter question. Since then greater emphasis has been placed on the former. Even more recently attention has been directed at the degree of complicity involved in the taking up of inferior positions. As one writer suggests:

"...there is an element of self damnation in the taking up of subordinate roles in Western capitalism." (137)

Be that as it may, the concern of this essay is with the first two issues: the mechanisms which create and maintain subordination and the social formations which derive from it.

Answers, it is suggested, have historically taken one of two broad forms. On the one hand is the approach which, focussing on the 'differentness' of the working class, sees the working class as having developed, in responses to its position and unique social experience, a 'culture' which has helped to make life tolerable and blunt the worst aspects, psychic and social, of subordination. On the other hand are those approaches which take as a starting point the fact of the common 'objective' position of manual workers as giving rise to a condition of common consciousness which would ultimately give rise to the pursuit of common purpose and action.

This distinction may be a little arbitrary since the approaches may not be too incompatible. In fact, in practice,

each in some measure relies on the other. For example the idea of 'working-class culture' is not too far from a notion of working-class consciousness in so far as increased interaction, integration and the generation of common values and purposes can be the basis for common consciousness of conditions and interests. The difference lies in the emphasis placed on either culture, as a set of values and practices, or consciousness, awareness of common condition and the generation of ideologies based on this awareness as the basis for action.

To compress these positions the first may be designated as the 'accommodative' approach and the second as the 'activist'. Thus there are two broad categories, or paradigms, for approaching the study of the working class distinguished by the relative importance attached to the way, and extent to which, the working class may be said to have accepted their position in capitalist society, or are in potential or active conflict with and opposition to capitalism.

The accommodative approach tends to proceed as follows. The working class has been, and remains, an unstable challenge to capitalism but is not a revolutionary threat. The ideological hegemony of capitalism and the institutionalisation of conflict and opposition have produced a working class neither able, nor willing, to challenge the prevailing social order. Only dimly aware of the 'facts' of inequality and incapable of formulating coherent oppositional ideologies the working class retreats into narrow parochial traditional cultures or instrumental economism. Working class social formations will be under-

stood as dimensions of this. Within this tradition is the idea that people do not see society as a whole: individuals are more aware of, and responsive to, the social relations in which they are most immediately involved. This has thus laid most emphasis on the implications of work place and community relations and other microcosmic aspects of the manual worker's life. Here we have revealed a working class whose primary concern, in one way or another, is with making out.

In contrast to this the 'activist' approach argues that the 'accommodationist' approach obscured the social role of the working class and its potential for action. Despite the cogency, supported by the revolutionary inaction of the working class, of the counter position, this group argues that it might be unwise to assume that manual workers are insensitive to the inequalities in which they are involved and are unaware of oppositional ideologies. Simply being a manual worker, with all that implies, will, it is suggested, be enough to dispose people to a proletarian world view and to oppositional values. Given these circumstances local conditions may play a consolidating role. Thus, far from there being a "fragmentary class structure" (138) in which a variety of possibilities exist depending on position in the productive process and local situation, these writers insist that the main lines of class division are clear and unitary. The British economy is still capitalist: property, profit and the market are still the key institutions and are the prime determinants of inequality and are important in other social arrangements too. As the main exponents - at least in print - of this point of view suggest:

"It has become standard practice in the formally agnostic tradition of academic sociology, to underline the complexity of patterns of inequality in contemporary Western societies. This practice is misleading. There is complexity in detail. But to focus on intricacies in this corner or that is to obscure the simplicity of the picture as a whole." (139)

What 'complexity of detail has been revealed'. The two traditions identified have in large measure proceeded independently. So to look at the accommodativist approaches first, we can discern at least six 'types' of working class. Taking them roughly in the order in which they were discovered or created we find.

The traditional working class: this group has emerged from their unique experience of continuing industrialisation with a clearly defined culture which marks it off from the dominant culture of the middle class. This culture is the response to the 'facts' of working class life and is mainly based on 'old' traditional industries of early industrialisation. In essentials it is inward looking, particularistic with limited perspectives and horizons. It has collectivist, non-radical orientations and is bounded by kin, work place, neighbourhood and local community. This is essentially a 'survival' or 'coping' culture.

The middle class worker: under the impact post 1945 of affluence, the welfare state, better working conditions and enlightened management this traditional culture would give way to middle class ways of life. The manual worker would be indistinguishable from the non-manual worker. Cultural homogenisation would have been achieved.

The traditional worker: in large measure as described above but with the important refinement of being divided into PROLETARIANS and DEFERENTIALS. These two may be distinguished by different 'images' of social reality.

The proletarian, sufficiently isolated from the mainstream social images, generates a conflict model of society. The 'us'-'them' dichotomy. The deferential worker, found in more diffuse social settings and not so insulated from the dominant versions of reality accepts things as they are, he is the accepting, acquiescent worker.

The isolated privatised worker: under the impact of: increased labour mobility, New technology, Owner Occupation, Urban dispersal, Increased education and the Influence of the mass media, the traditional working class in both its forms is in decline. In its place is the prototypical 'new' working class. NOT middle class since it lacks the basic pre-requisites: non-manual jobs, and all this entails, and a prestige version of social reality, this group blurs class differences with a 'pecuniary' model of social reality.

The middle-class worker again: despite his demise in Luton ressurected in Liverpool. Given the 'prime' circumstances the bourgeois worker, it is claimed, is very much a living type. These prime circumstances are: middle class origins, owner occupation, weak work and community ties. When these are right, education and income above the minimum increases the likelihood that the manual worker will adopt middle class images. In these circumstances the manual worker is indistinguishable from the middle class. (140)

The central working class: this group is in substitution for the isolated working class outlined above. That an isolated and privatised group with reduced community and work ties and increased hom centredness exists among manual workers is not in doubt. What is, is the notion that there

is a 'pecuniary' model of society. This group is less working class than the proletarians but will veer to the middle class with respect to: class of origin, occupational community and housing circumstances.

Within the other tradition we find just one actual or potential working class:

The politically and ideologically conscious working class:

the common 'objective' position of the working class will give rise to a 'universal' common consciousness with the possibility of political action.

From these detailed types of working class we may be able, within the two main paradigms, to distinguish three broad types of working class. Within the tradition which emphasises the non-revolutionary, accommodative aspects of working class life we have:

The proletarian/traditional working class: a declining group rooted in old traditional work situations and clinging to old communities and ways of life. Characterised by a non-radical, collectivist accommodative culture.

The 'central' 'new' 'isolated' 'privatised' working class: the prototypical, if not yet typical, working class. Arising from the decay of the traditional working class, living in fragmented communities, with weak work and community ties, this group is no longer committed to kin, and community but to economism, instrumentalism, consumption and leisure. Furthermore a perception of the historic mission of the working class has been replaced by ambiguous, incoherent, confused and contradictory visions of social reality dominated by money.

Against these two, and within the tradition which emphasises the potential for action within the working class, we have:

The politically and ideologically conscious working class:

Manual workers are not so insensitive to the 'facts of inequality and the social relations and arrangements of capitalist society. Simply being a manual worker will be enough to predispose people to a proletarian view of the world and oppositional values.

It is now possible to confront what is an important working-class institution, the Working Men's Club. If we accept that the Working Men's Club is an historic emanation of aspects of working-class life, whatever its origins in Victorian reform ideology, which will be shaped by and evolve with the working class experience, then one or more of the above perspectives will be reflected in Working Men's Clubs. It may therefore be possible to examine the manner and degree to which modern clubs reflect each or all of these versions of working classness. And how what 'goes on' in clubs may reflect back on these perspectives.

Historically and sociologically the notion of the 'traditional working class' has been especially influential. Applied to Working Men's Clubs one would expect them to be located in areas of traditional industry - mining, etc. - and reflecting historically a vigorous collectivist community based culture, and presently the decline and decay of such communities. Their continued existence, assuming little change would make them anachronistic, fringe activities appealing to older members of declining communities. Strange beery dinosaurs whose failure to evolve will lead to their eventual extinction.

Alternatively the idea that Working Men's Clubs have atrophied may be replaced with the notion that since the circum-

stances, physical and social, of the working class have changed, so too, will one of its key institutions. Thus the 'new' working class will translate the club from being a dimension of a collectivist 'coping' culture into a more glittering, flashy arena for the pursuit of leisure.

The club's appeal, in contrast to the 'pub and other forms of leisure, will be instrumental. Run as businesses the clubs can benefit members by offering a range of facilities cheaper than competitors. Additionally their bright new premises will reflect addluence and 'success'.

If the vision of the potentially oppositional working class is adhered to then the clubs may be seen as places important for working out some of the contradictions of working class experience. For the elaboration and communication of oppositional ideas and the pursuit of long term working class interests.

In point of fact in any area, or even in any club each of these dimensions will be present. Clubs may reflect transitions from one to another. The following account of Working Men's Clubs in Tamworth will follow this line of thought.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Donald ROY: Review article in Sociology, Vol. 8, No.3
September 1974.
2. Anthony GIDDENS: Elites, New Society 16th November 1972
3. B.M. SPINLEY: The Deprived and the Privileged, R.K.P.
1953 pvi.
4. It is worth noting that there is little research specifically on the middle class. Colin BELL: Middle Class Families R.K.P. 1972 is the notable, systematic sociological account in Britain. As for the upper class, their appearance in sociological literature is even more rare. LUPTON and WILSON: Kinship Connections of Top Decision Makers is again a rare exception. Roy PERROTT: The Aristocrats or Anthony SAMPSON: The Anatomy of Britain is more the journalistic norm.
5. For a discussion of the connection between poverty surveys and sociological theories see: Robert PINKER: Social Theory and Social Policy, Heineman Educational Books 1971, Ch.2, pp.48-94:

"...the empirical tradition in English Social Science... was problem oriented, eclectic in its choice of subject and relatively unconcerned with theory."
6. Most notably Peter TOWNSEND: The Meaning of Poverty,
BJS XV111 No.3, September 1962, p.215.
7. See for example: Peter TOWNSEND: The Concept of Poverty
Heineman Educational Books, 1971, p.ix:

"In the mid-1950's a number of studies appearing in Britain showed that despite post-war social reform ...there was poverty among old people, fatherless families, the unemployed and the sick...Up to that stage few people in any advanced industrial society believed that following the 1939 war substantial poverty remained."

This was perhaps a curious phase in approaches to working class life (most of the poor were of course working class!). Based on sound fabian principles and cast

very much in the tradition of Booth and Rowntree its main focus was the London School of Economics and the work of Richard TITMUSS and his research assistants. Three points can perhaps be made about this phase. First it ushered in a plethora of organisations set up to deal with various groups and their poverty problems, Child Poverty Action Group perhaps being the best known; and a more concerted attack was mounted on state provision. Later more radical groups sprang up for example The Claimants Union and possibly Shelter. Second, it provides a rather curious paradox in that at the very same time that poverty in the welfare state was being discovered versions of 'we are all middle class now' were gripping the imagination of journalists, politicians, and many sociologists. Finally, perhaps another paradox, the work of this school, in providing evidence for the continuing inequalities of post-war capitalism, provided the basis for more radical examinations of working class consciousness.

8. Health and education stand out as examples here; with education exemplifying this kind of research best.

From the work in the early 1950's by A.H. HALSEY and Ruth GLASS:

hosts of research indicated the inequities in what was thought to be a near perfect educational system. Often descriptive and empirical and sometimes offering explanations of the 'working class do less well because....

(fit in any correlate you like as long as it puts the blame on the working class) type, this research was rarely specifically theoretical. Although as Martyn HAMMERSLEY and Peter WOODS: The Process of Schooling,

Open University Press 1976 p 1, suggest:

"The sociology of education in Britain largely dates from the 1950's. Theoretical and methodological orientations in this field have paralleled those in sociology as a whole...Thus in the fifties most work was concerned with the question of educational opportunity and was informed by the structural-functional empirical social research axis..."

Examples of the work which stands out are:

J.W.B. DOUGLAS: The Home and the School.

Brian JACKSON and Dennis MARSDEN: Education and the Working Class.

Michael CARTER: Home, School and Work.

Additionally the period was replete with government reports:

CROWTHER 1959: Early Leaving

NEWSOM 1966: Half Our Future

ROBBINS 1963: Higher Education

PLOWDEN 1967: Primary Education

9. See E.J. HOBBSBAWN:

10. For an interesting account of the period between the wars, specifically from the point of view of the working class see: Allen HUTT: The Post War History of the Working Class, Victor Gollancz, 1937. Republished in 1972 by E.P. Publications Ltd. For an account of the scope of the changes and events leading to the General Strike see: Jeffrey SKELLY (ed): The General Strike 1926, Lawrence and Wishart 1976, essay by John FOSTER: British Imperialism and the Labour Aristocracy, pp 3-52.

11. George ORWELL: The Road to Wigan Pier 1937.

George ORWELL: Down and Out in Paris and London 1933.

Walter GREENWOOD: Love on the Dole 1933.

12. For example:

Alan SILLITOE: Saturday Night and Sunday Morning

Alan SILLITOE: Raw Material 1972

Jeremy SEABROOK: The Unprivileged 1969

Jeremy SEABROOK: City Close Up 1971

13. Marie PANATH: Branch Street, Alan and Unwin 1944

B.M. SPINLEY op cit;

Madeleine KERR: The People of Ship Street, R.K.P. 1958

Norman DENNIS, Fernando HENRIQUES and Clifford SLAUGHTER:

Coal is Our Life, Tavistock 1956.

The following reconstruction of aspects of working-class life draws on: Josephine KLEIN: Samples from English Culture, Vol I, R.K.P. 1965, generally; and specifically for PANATH and KERR.

14. John B. MAYS: Growing up in the City

15. Josephine KLEIN op cit; p.4. Such areas have now been 'rediscovered' in the streets of Toxteth for example.

16. B.M. SPINLEY, op cit; p.6.

17. ibid; p.20.

18. ibid; p.27. Assuming of course SPINLEY can surmount the problem of differentiating between the 'subjective' observer and the 'object' of his observation. 'Object reality' reality is obviously hers.

19. This list should be compared with the criteria offered in the Plowden Report, some twenty years later, for Educational Priority Areas. Also the difference between the sophistry of the psychanthropological approach and the 'intrepid' explorer of the nineteenth and early twentieth century is but little.

20. ibid; p.79.

21. ibid; p.91.
22. ibid; p.116
23. ibid; p.120
24. Josephine KLEIN, op cit; pp.11-34.
25. ibid; footnote on p.34.
26. ibid; pp.42-71.
27. DENNIS et al, op cit; p.246.
28. ibid; p.247.
29. Josephine KLEIN, op cit; p.75.
30. ibid; p.78.
31. Norman DENNIS, et al, op cit; p.130.
32. Josephine KLEIN; op cit; p.81.
33. ibid; p.83.
34. ibid; p.90. It is worth noting that the notion of 'cognitive poverty', which I take to be of a psychological nature, was later to be given sociological substance when it was discovered that working-class images of society were 'confused' 'ambiguous' 'incoherent' etc.. See discussion below.
35. ibid; p.90.
36. Richard HOGGART: The Uses of Literacy, Pelican 1962, p.119.
37. Josephine KLEIN, op cit; p.95.
38. For an extended, and now famous account of the working class and their leisure and its relationship with some of the attitudes already discussed see Richard HOGGART op cit; Chapter 5, The Full Rich Life.
39. Norman DENNIS et al; op cit; p.248. The brass band is given some credit in: Brian JACKSON: Working Class Community, Pelican 1968, p.22.

40. Josephine KLEIN, op cit; p.103.
41. ibid; p.106.
42. Norman DENNIS et al; op cit; p.190.
43. ibid;
44. Michael Young and Peter WILLMOTT: Family and Kinship in East London, R.K.P. 1957.
45. ibid; p.12.
46. Elisabeth BOTT: Family and Social Network, Tavistock 1957, p.79.
47. Richard HOGGART, op cit; p.119.
48. This picture of 'traditional working-class life has been contrasted both with the 'new' working class: John GOLDTHORPE, David LOCKWOOD, Frank BECHHOFFER and Jennifer PLATT: The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, Cambridge 1969, Chapter 5, p.116, more of which below, also see Josephine KLEIN, op cit; Chapter 5, p.219: 'Aspects of Change in Working Class Life'; and the middle class, John GOLDTHORPE et al, op cit; pp.118-121. See too, Josephine KLEIN, op cit; Chapter 6, pp.303-429: 'Aspects of Middle-Class Life'. For a recent and critical comment on such contrasts and the assumptions behind them, and the conclusions drawn from them see: John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLER: Class in a Capitalist Society, Pelican Edition, p.336 and pp.378 et.seq;
49. Social class differences in socialising practices have been the subject of a good deal of sociological attention. Perhaps the work of Basil BERNSTEIN: is the most sophisticated of this genre. Language use, Bernstein suggests, is a product of interaction, especially that between mother and child. The formation

of language 'codes' is closely linked to assumptions about the nature of social reality. Broadly, the middle class view of the world as manipulable and subject to control, will result in a sophisticated language structure designed to cope with and symbolise this world. This he calls an 'elaborated code'. The middle class child is inculcated into a world in which individual autonomy is developed within the context of general rules. The working-class child is introduced to a world of restrictive particularism and develops an appropriately 'restricted code' of language. Criticised by for example, LABOV in Nell KEDDY: Tinker Tailor for his assumptions about the nature of language and the inability of 'restricted codes' to express sophisticated and abstract ideas, it has also been criticised by John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLER, op cit; p.337 for:

"...his contrast between 'working' and 'middle' can be extraordinarily crude...vacuous use of the term middle clas..."

50. Josephine KLEIN; op cit; p.303.

51. ibid. p.x.

52. Brian JACKSON, op cit; p.4.

53. John GOLDTHORPE, et al; op cit; pp.1-29.

54. ibid; p.4.

55. ibid; p.9.

56. See for example:

C.A.R. CROSLAND: The Future of Socialism. Cape 1956.

M. ABRAM et al; Must Labour Lose. Penguin 1960.

M. ZWEIG: The Worker in an Affluent Society.

For a more extensive list of works putting forward versions of this thesis see WESTERGAARD and RESLER: op cit; footnote, 9, p.16.

57. David LOCKWOOD: Sources of Variation in Working-Class Images of Society. Sociological Review, No. 14, November 1966.
58. Martin BULMER: Working-Class Images of Society, R.K.P. 1975, p.3.
59. John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLER: op cit; p.14.
60. Martin BULMER: op cit; p.4.
61. ibid; p.5.
62. ibid; p.10.
63. ibid; p.16.
64. ibid; p.17.
65. The most consistent use of the idea of a 'deferential working class' has been in attempting to explain the commitment of some working-class voters to the Tory party. For example:
Eric NORDLINGER: Working-Class Tories.
Robert MacKENZIE and A SILVER: Angels in Marble.
As an explanation of why some members of the subordinate class should vote for the political representatives of the dominant class this idea lacks force and conviction to say nothing of failing to explain why only some of the lower class are thus deluded. Additionally the conception of class used by MacKENZIE and SILVER is crude even by conventional 'socio-economic group' standards.
66. David LOCKWOOD op cit; in BULMER op cit; pp.25 and 26.
67. Martin BULMER op cit; p.6.
68. Elisabeth BOTT, op cit; p.163.
70. Martin BULMER, op cit; p.9.
71. John GOLDTHORPE and David LOCKWOOD et al; op cit; p.164.

72. ibid; p.129.
73. ibid; p.153.
74. ibid; p.27
75. Gavin MacKENZIE: The 'Affluent Worker' Study: An Evaluation and Critique: in Frank PARKIN (ed): The Social Analysis of the Class Structure: Tavistock, 1974. pp.237-256.
76. R.L. DAVIS and Jim COUSINS: The 'New Working Class' and the Old: in Martin BULMER, op cit; pp.192-205.
77. ibid; p.202.
78. John WESTERGAARD: The Rediscovery of the Cash Nexus, in The Socialist Register 1970, pp.111-138.
79. R.L. DAVIS and Jim COUSINS: op cit; p.196.
80. Martin BULMER: op cit.
81. Jim COUSINS and Richard BROWN: Patterns of Paradox: Shipbuilding Workers' Images of Society: in BULMER, op cit; pp.55-82.
82. R.M. BLACKBURN and Michael MANN: Ideology in the non-skilled working class, in BULMER, op cit; pp.131-160.
83. ibid; p.131.
84. ibid; p.148.
85. Frank PARKIN: Class Inequality and Political Order, Palladin, 1972, Chapter 3, p.79. et.seq.
86. R.M. BLACKBURN and Michael MANN; op cit; p.155.
87. ibid; p.155.
88. Michael MANN: The Working Class, New Society, Vol.38; No. 735, November 1976, pp.240-243.
89. Michael MANN, op cit.
90. ibid;;.
91. ibid;;.
92. ibid;;.

93. *ibid*;
94. Michael MANN: Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working Class, MacMillan, 1973.
95. *ibid*; p.33.
96. *ibid*; p.32.
97. *ibid*; p.39.
98. *ibid*; p.42.
99. *ibid*; p.58.
100. *ibid*; pp.71-72.
101. The idea of the revolutionary potential of the 'new' working class lies, MANN suggests, in the work of Allain TOURRAINE and Serge MALLETT. According to whom there has been a shift away from capital in the direction of the application and production of knowledge. Institutionally located in the universities and more plausibly in some advanced, automated industries, such as chemicals, gas, oil, electricity, here may be found technically trained manual workers, technicians and assorted engineers. These groups of workers have essential skills, knowledge of which is denied to traditional managers and capitalists. This group, it is suggested, is most likely to generate radical consciousness. This idea is based on TOURRAINE'S three stage model of the development of technology: craft production, mass production, automated production. The first two, based on old crafts and working-class communities, resenting and opposing the encroachment of industrialisation are doomed to failure since they oppose not only the relations of production but also the forces of production. In the third stage the reaction is not against the modern aspects of society -

- consumption and industrialisation - but against the systems of industrial control based on private property.
102. Michael MANN; op cit; p.67.
103. Frank PARKIN; op cit; p.18.
104. ibid; p.48.
105. The definition of 'power' in mind here is perhaps an unhappy amalgum of the Weberian notion of 'manipulation' and the Marxian notion of 'exploitation'. 'Authority' here is not complicated by the Charismatic, Traditional, Rational types of Weber but refers to:
- "the social power which a person believes to be legitimate and is contrasted with social power relies on coercive consequences of non-compliance for its effectiveness."
- Open University Glossary of Sociological Concepts: 1972.
106. This area is complicated beyond the scope of this essay: Parkin's discussion is on pp.49-60, op cit. For the related notion, 'social closure':
- "...the process by which social collectivities seek to maximise rewards by restricting access to rewards and opportunities to a limited circle of eligibles."
- See Frank PARKIN (ed), op cit; Strategies of Social Closure in Class Formation, pp.1-15.
107. WESTERGAARD and RESLER, op cit., deal extensively with this point in Part Five: Acquiescence and Dissent: Responses to Inequality, pp.343-421.
108. That is the degree to which religion is either the source, or the basis of, a justificatory ideology for the position of the dominant group and continuing inequalities. Some writers have pursued the idea that religion may, for some groups, function as an adoption to low social and economic status in this world by offering certain rewards in the next. Here, poverty, is the prerequisite for heaven. Alternatively, religion

may for any members of the subordinate group allow for expressive outlets denied them in the normal course of social relations. Both of these themes are pursued by: Bryan WILSON: Sects and Society, Heineman, 1961.

109. H.F. MOORHOUSE and C.W. CHAMBERLAIN: Lower Class Attitudes to Property, Sociology, Vol. 8, No. 3, September 1974, p.401, say of this idea:

"This conceptualisation is not altogether satisfactory as the major institutional order would seem to be the expression of dominant values rather than their 'source'. The major institutional order certainly diffuses these values but their 'source' would seem to be those blessed with power and advantage in society."

110. Frank PARKIN; op cit; p.90.
111. ibid; p.100.
112. ibid;.
113. C.B. MacPHERSON: The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, Oxford Paperbacks, 1962.
114. John WESTERGAARD; op cit.
115. Two articles are involved here:
H.E. MOORHOUSE and C.W. CHAMBERLAIN: op cit; 1974.
H.F. MOORHOUSE: Attitudes to Class and class relationships in Britain: Sociology, Vol. 10, No. 3, September 1976, pp.468-496.
116. MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN; op cit; p.389.
117. MOORHOUSE; op cit; p.469.
118. MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN; op cit; p.390.
119. ibid; p.391.
120. ibid; p.400.
121. ibid;.
122. MOORHOUSE; op cit; p.471.
123. MOORHOUSE and CHAMBERLAIN; op cit; p.46.

124. MOORHOUSE; op cit; p.490.
125. ibid; pp.477-478.
126. ibid; p.478.
127. John WESTERGAARD; op cit.
128. U.G. RUNCIMAN: Relative Deprivation and Social Justice
1966.
- R.T. MCKENZIE and A. SILVER; op cit.
- J.H. GOLDTHORPE and David LOCKWOOD et al; op cit.
129. John WESTERGAARD; op cit; p.119.
130. ibid; p.120.
132. ibid; p.132.
133. John WESTERGAARD: The Myth of Classlessness, in
Robin BLACKBURN: Ideology in Social Science, Fontana
1972.
134. John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLER; op cit.
135. ibid. p.347.
136. Michael MANN: Review article: Sociology, Vol. 10,
No. 3, September 1976, pp.516-518.
137. Paul WILLIS: Learning to Labour, Saxon House, 1977.
138. K. ROBERTS, F.G. COOK, S.C. CLARK, Elizabeth SEMEONEFF:
The Fragmentary Class Structure, Heineman, 1977.
139. John WESTERGAARD and Henrietta RESLER: op cit; p.423.
140. ROBERTS et al.; op cit.

CHAPTER 6

THE CLUBS: GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Working Men's Clubs are more coy than pubs; they advertise themselves almost perfunctorily with small, illuminated notices more often dedicated to advertising the main beer sold rather than the club. Of course, other than in the circumstances outlined above, clubs differ from pubs on the important particular that members of the public are debarred from entry. They are often, especially in Tamworth, due to their origins, to be found in older parts of towns or in older communities occupying buildings built for anything but clubs. Most clubs were founded by small numbers of working men, sometimes as few as ten or twenty, living in a particular locality and often having a common occupational background. Perforce, they were close to the homes of the men. Usually fairly close, but not necessarily, to their work, hidden amongst the surrounding factories and houses. To any but members, they are often unknown. When the clubs become richer they move to more elaborate premises, sometimes purpose built, In most cases elaborate extensions costing many thousands of pounds have been added. Few clubs now occupy the original premises. Most clubs are deceptively small from the outside. The fronts of old houses, warehouses, and the like, with narrow frontages which hide more extensive facilities in the back. A problem which faces many of these older clubs which had neither the opportunity nor the foresight to purchase adjacent land is the problem of providing car parking facilities for their increasingly motorised membership.

Clubs do of course vary but in almost all but the smallest the basic format is the same with differences being more contingent on circumstances or accident than on intention. One, or in some cases two, bar or bar-type rooms tend to

be the focal point of the club. In many cases when this is the only bar it has a spartan, albeit scrubbed and polished quality - no carpet, plain 'functional' furniture and little compromise with comfort of the 'lounge bar' type.

When more than one bar is present one may take on the character of a lounge with the addition of a carpet, more elaborate furniture and some concessions to comfort. In some cases the luxury of two bars as such is foregone in favour of a room with no bar - though drinks may be taken in - easy chairs, often a television, rarely used, other than on busy nights. In many cases clubs have a bar which resembles a lounge (1). In one club in the Tamworth area such a room is better appointed than the best pub in the area. In addition to the bar or bar-like rooms there is almost always a large room, often known as the concert room, which has a stage, electronic announcing equipment, devoted to activities such as dancing, bingo, concerts and in some clubs boxing. In effect to any activity which requires extensive floor space and facilities to communicate to large numbers of people. This room normally has a large number of chairs and tables from end to end of the club. This type of room is normally represented as being THE working men's club in popular consciousness. Further to these two rooms, which in most cases represent the total facilities, there is usually some scope for darts and snooker. In larger clubs a room is often given over to these activities. Sometimes with a bar. Facilities for other games, cards, dominos and the like are often provided.

Clubs usually have an entrance 'hall' or small room given over to the signing in book, in some cases a door man, and to a notice board (2) giving information about forthcoming

events, the results of raffles and totes and other information respecting the activities of the club. This may include warnings about guests, information about convalescent homes, the control of children and the like. It is this battery of information, warning and advice which gives immediately, on entrance to a club, an atmosphere different from a pub. Though in many pub bars such information may, on a smaller scale, be found.

Clubs, perhaps more than pubs, are dependent on the work arrangements of their members. Thus, since most men are at work during the day often too far from the clubs for their convenient use between 11.30 and 2.30, this time of the day is mostly a blank for the clubs. Reflected perhaps, contrary to the popular trend, in the lack of provision of food (3). In contrast to the image of clubs as arenas of throbbing gregariousness the clubs are quiet, almost empty places at these times with an air of desultory casualness and given over to older men or the occasional afternoon or night shift worker. Here retired men (4) will reminisce, joke or reflect on the uncertain world of the present. The use of clubs in the mid-day period does of course increase at the weekend. Here much of the 'business' of the club is conducted: drawing of totes, meetings of the various internal clubs, etc. So much so that during the weekend mid-day is often the busiest time. Especially if betting offices or football grounds offer additional local facilities. Evenings in clubs again vary in the amount of usage. Monday to Thursday is invariably quieter than the three days of the weekend. Special evenings may be devoted to such things as midweek matches of cards, dominoes or darts or for the meetings of inter-club clubs such as angling or football. Mid-

week also sees the regular drinkers and those who use the club purely 'socially'. Once again women are much less in evidence in the week. Though there may be special womens' nights when events such as bingo are organised entirely by women members. This is not to say that the club serves no purpose in the week - though many clubs associated with specific institutions like rugby clubs, football clubs and the like often confine their activities to the weekend only - it is, as it were, part of their life as institutions to change their mood and character over a period of time reflecting the lives, circumstances and purposes of the members. One thing which characterises clubs, like many institutions, is their sameness, not only as between each other, but within the same club over a period of time. They are by no means the settings for the riotous uncertainty of popular legend but in fact have an almost steadfast dedication to orderly predictable ordinariness (5).

Typically every club provides, at least on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, some form of entertainment. Almost surely bingo, and nearly as surely some kind of music. On 4th August 1982 in the local paper, The Tamworth Herald, twenty clubs advertised, 'for members information', the weekend entertainment. Without exception this consisted of bingo and some musical group. For example the following is typical:

KETTLEBROOK WORKING MEN'S CLUB

For members information.

Tonight (Fri) Eyes Down.

Tomorrow (Sat) Embers Duo plus

Three Eyes Down.

Sunday, Aug, 6th Eyes Down.

Tuesday, Aug, 8th Ladies' Night

Eyes Down

Almost certainly this represents a large part of what goes on in clubs. However, from the details below it will be seen that a range of activities is the ground base for the club. In fact many say that it is these activities, in opposition to the pub, which makes the working men's club attractive.

Thus a typical weekend evening will start with the early arrivals buying a drink, exchanging bantering pleasantries with whoever is present, and settling into a position in the club, often in anticipation of others arriving either to join in drinking or become involved in table games of one kind or another. Often such groups assemble weekly and are of long standing. Many of the older members will drink for a short time in the early evenings then go before the club gets full. Often children or grandchildren will support very old or frail members from the club at an appointed time. The club gradually fills up and the diverse activities will begin to take form. Preparation for bingo takes place, while the 'big room' fills gently, more women arrive, who sit while husbands, sons, grandsons, boy friends or fathers fetch drinks (5a). Fruit machines are popular, casual 10p-20p players of the early evening gradually give way to more dedicated players who will spend a good deal more. £5 or more may not be unusual. With prizes up to £100 now very common the attraction is obvious. 'If I win anything like they won't see me in work tomorrow' is a commonly expressed sentiment. Once a club is 'under way' for the evening these machines are rarely out of use. Queues form in huddled interest around the machine, comiserating with or congratulating the player of the moment. Anxiety to have a go runs high. When bingo finally starts at about nine o'clock the

machines get a brief respite when non bingo players take over, more modestly; between houses the bingo players are back, dividing their time between getting another drink and playing the machine. Often syndicates are formed playing pre-agreed amounts and sharing in any winnings. News of big wins - 'drops' - gets around quickly and may deter the more casual player.

By nine thirty the clubs activities are fully under way. Snooker and darts - often matches - have begun and the variety of raffles and totes with which the evening will be regaled begin to be passed around the clubs (6). Winners, in certain cases, being announced on the same evening in other cases being left to Sunday. This latter, and the often used device of picking a persons membership number randomly and offering a prize if he or she is in the club may secure higher attendance on a Sunday mid-day. In the case of the membership number prize the member must be present at the time, if he is not the prize doubles each week until the person is present. Raffles and totes are pinned on notice boards and prizes kept for some time for them to be claimed. Drinking is the main activity. This is the foundation upon which all else rests. Drinking is regular, but rarely excessive (7). It is conducted within a normal pattern of reciprocities and obligations. Debts must be honoured. One must 'stand ones corner' 'pay ones ack'. Subtle asides and not so subtle banging of the table with empty glasses draws the recalcitrent's attention to his obligation. In extreme cases glasses will be turned upside down on the table! Standing at the bar to drink, a common practice, especially in lounge bars, in pubs, is expressly forbidden. Notices above the bar request: 'People must move away from the bar after being served. By order of the committee.' In many

clubs rails around the bar are used for an 'in' and 'out' system which ensures equity in being served. Buying drinks is not complicated although what is wanted should be known and should be clearly expressed. Long debates about exactly what is wanted either with the self, friend or bar staff are disliked and discouraged. The order, if it contains more than one item should be dealt with all at once, not item by item, which may involve long delays while journeys up and down the bar are repeated. It also gives the person next in line some idea as to how long he will have to wait and avoid the annoying uncertainty of the one-at-a-time order. After thoughts are tolerated: 'give us a bag of crisps as well' (8). Long waits to be served produce ready criticism first of bar staff, then the steward and finally the committee.

Apart from weekends the broad outlines of the above will pertain with minor variations contingent upon the number of people and the types of activity. The following is a general outline of a number of aspects of club life and activity.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Detailed information about membership is not readily available. Little information is obtained on application for membership beyond name and address, and, as far as I can tell, after the names are placed on a ledger for the control of the payments of annual subscriptions no other record is kept. Disciplinary action may be documented and retained but I am not sure how. Size of membership is a product of historical factors - large numbers of elderly members for example - but the 'flow' of members and thus the preservation of the club seems to depend very much on location. Here there is often

a paradox. Older clubs, founded when an area was bouyant and successful, decline when the areas take on the characteristic of urban decay. Alternatively clubs may be situated in area which undergoes development, private or public, and rapid expansion and the influx of population expands and rejuvenates a club. Two such clubs will be the subject of the latter part of this essay dealing with the insights that clubs may give to the present position of the working class.

Clubs in decline will often have this attributed to poor management, a poor steward, an influx of people from other areas who 'take over' the club (in the case of Tamworth from BIRMINGHAM since it is an overspill area for the city), or even in more sophisticated discussion the innate inability of working men to run a business. On this latter point most members of working men's clubs are working class, including officers and stewards, in the narrow sense of being manual workers. The odd clerk or teacher may be found but are rarely on committees, they are often connected with clubs through manual working brothers or fathers. Women are always present but, as has been suggested above their position is often ambiguous.

CLUB FACILITIES

DRINK. Despite the 19th century prohibition drinking is now the central activity. The range of drinks does not differ markedly from that of pubs. The normal range of beers and lagers are sold. However, there are two points of difference between clubs and pubs. Since clubs are not tied they can sell what they like as long as they pay their bills. Thus a much wider choice of beer is available. This is mostly the keg beer so much scorned by discriminating middle-class

drinkers and members of the beer pressure group CAMRA. In addition more people drink mild in clubs than is the case in pubs. Beyond this the average clubman is not a discerning drinker, a fact reflected in the limited range of spirits and whiskey sold. Plain popular brands only. Wine is increasingly present in the cheap form pushed by breweries and sold by the glass. So too is sherry in much the same form.

FOOD. For most clubs the impetus to provide food has not been present. The small mid-day trade and the tradition of taking food to work has led to poor provision. Sandwiches and bread rolls may be obtained at most clubs and crisps, nuts and the like are readily available. However, in line with changed expectations and improved catering technology some clubs provide, mainly at weekends, some cooked food. This is usually of the deep-frozen-fast-fry variety and marks a very significant change from previous practice.

GAMES. All the clubs I know have a range of facilities which provide diversions for members. The bulk of these are either indoor sports like snooker, table tennis and such or various games associated with 'betting': bingo, fruit machines, totes and raffles. These activities are an important backdrop to the life of the club both in terms of activities for members and as contributions to club finances.

TEAMS AND CLUBS. Most clubs have internal teams and clubs of various types mainly reflecting the external interests of members. Angling, gardening, pigeon keeping and so on. Leagues are organised for traditional club games, darts, dominoes and cards (mainly cribbage). Some clubs have bowls, where greens have not been taken for car parks, and many have football teams.

POLITICS. Most working men's clubs are almost fanatically nonpolitical. There is no official connection with any political party and there is a very strong feeling that they should not be seen to be an arm of either a political party or a trade union. So much so that many clubs will not allow the use of rooms or any facilities for meetings of parties or unions. Despite this there are a few clubs used by the Labour Party and the odd trade union, none, to my knowledge, is used by the Conservative Party. Clubs are never used in such a way that they could be accused of being the headquarters of a political party. This despite the presence in many clubs of prominent councillors as members. This point goes further. Few clubs are involved in local issues. The club is never a pressure group nor are facilities extended to such things as play groups, old age pensioner meeting places, outside of opening hours, clinics or venues for shows or other activities. The club is therefore entirely inward looking. Dedicated to a narrow range of activities and interests and meeting a fairly narrow range of needs.

ENTERTAINMENTS. Apart from facilities for betting and gaming and pub sports, points on which clubs differ only in extent of provision from pubs - fruit machine prizes are higher and sporting provision more extensive - the provision of entertainment for members is almost always present at least at weekends. This is an important difference between pubs and clubs. Although some pubs make some provision for entertainment is of recent date. The entertainment tradition, as was suggested above goes back to the inception of the clubs and reflects fairly closely the musical entertainment tradition of the day. Concerts, common up to the 1960's, incorporating a number of 'artists': comedian, singer, etc.,

linked with a dance band (possibly still common in the north), gave way in the 1970's to the 'group' usually providing background to bingo, beer and conversation. Little intrinsic interest seemed to be attached to these 'groups' though they were often well advertised on the local press. In some clubs the 'group' clings on but has, in most cases given way to the disco. A mixed blessing in the view of many club officials. On the one hand they are cheap on the other attracting younger people, often not club members, (signed in by any one who will) given to 'trouble', often violent. Some clubs now restrict disco nights to members only. A rather self defeating exercise if the intention is to attract more trade.

Young people are rarely specifically catered for. Thus little in clubs is directed to the 16-20 age group as such. They are either, by virtue of living locally and having parents and grand-parents as members, gradually incorporated into the life of clubs and accept what is provided, or go elsewhere for entertainment. Certainly this group is underrepresented in most clubs. This point is illustrated by a group of teenagers who fought long and hard for a juke box in one of the clubs which when it was provided was of interest for a matter of weeks only. It has fallen into disrepair with no pressure being brought for its reuse. The same fate has attended the space invaders.

Reduced to a systematic list, the following is the sum of normal club activity drawn from the clubs I have looked at in Tamworth. Tamworth may not be typical, and every club has its own 'atmosphere'. However I am fairly sure that the difference between these clubs and clubs elsewhere will be one of emphasis only. Size for example is important. The

larger the club the more is offered. But, on a day-to-day basis the framework remains the same.

Club:- Name:- Type:-	Founded	Area (type	Members No.		FACILITIES			
					Drink			
			M	F	B	S	W	HO
Tamworth Progressive W.M.C.	1926		1,200	800	✓	✓	✓	X
Co-Op Employees	1922		300	200	✓	✓	✓	X
Drayton Bassett	1941		750	450	✓	✓	✓	X
Polesworth Miners	1933		1,000	1,000	✓	✓	✓	X
Kettlebrook	1930s		500	250	✓	✓	✓	Pie ✓
Glascote	1910		2,300	700	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dosthill	1921		600	400	✓	✓	✓	X
Amington Liberal	1888		1,200	800	✓	✓	✓	X
Tamworth W.M.C.	Not known		600		✓	✓	✓	X
Belgrave	1910		750	250	✓	✓	✓	X
Two Gates	Not known				✓	✓	✓	✓
Wilnecote	1907		2,000		✓	✓	✓	X
Suffield Lodge	1956		700		✓	✓	✓	X

Teams

Crisps Etc.	Darts	Doms.	Cards	Bowls	Snooker	Football	Angling
----------------	-------	-------	-------	-------	---------	----------	---------

✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Clubs						Other	
Football	Gardening	Other	Bingo	Machines	Concerts	Dances	Raffles Totes
x	x		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
x	x		✓	✓	x	x	✓
x	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	x	Pigeon	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	Pigeon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
x	x		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

ace
aders Disco

/ ✓

/ x

/ x

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Bar and lounge are not such common expressions in clubs where the distinction which they embody in pubs is by no means so clear cut. Since the social class division in the pub is not present in the working men's club other terminology expressive of other distinctions is present. Although in many clubs, especially those in mining areas, superior working men, overmen in the pits for example, although essentially manual workers, often had a room or part of a room of their own. It is still said that more coal was cut in these rooms, and in the club generally than ever was in the shift! This type of occupational distinction is no longer present in any clubs. Thus distinctions between rooms tend to be between the 'concert room', the 'big room', the 'snooker room', the 'back', the 'new room' (although it may in fact be twenty or more years old!).
2. These notice boards represent one of the important features of clubs namely the presence of a host of informal rules in addition to the formal rules of the rule book discussed above. In practice it is these day-to-day informal rules which provide the framework for the orderly conduct of the club. Instructions as to the control of children, use of fruit machines, dart boards, snooker tables outlines of those activities which will result in disciplinary action are some of the things dealt with here.
3. A feature of most clubs both during the day and the evening is the almost total absence of food beyond crisps and the assorted pre-packed nuts, etc. common to almost everywhere from newsagents to supermarkets via pubs and

clubs. In some cases the ubiquitous pre-cooked fresh-frozen pie is heated in a cabinet on the bar. Sandwiches are rare. However, on certain occasions, darts matches for example, when opposing teams are entertained more elaborate food is often provided. This is usually free for all: team members, opposition and any one who happens to be in the club or room at the time.

4. A phenomena to be observed in pubs also is the often ageing character of the mid-day clientele. While opportunity is an obvious component of this, both the pub and club seem to be important settings for certain retired working-class men to combat the loneliness and the 'time-on-the-hands' problem of men, the bulk of whose life has been involved in the routine pursuit of a livelihood in a society in which leisure, family life and work are segregated.
5. The following account tries, inadequately, to describe typical activities in a typical club. It has no claim or pretension to anthropological perception but does try to avoid some of the more obvious traps of the writing about working men's clubs which are alien institutions to many commentators. Two obvious pitfalls are either to see them as a living reflection of a throbbing, vigorous and gregarious working-class culture: the romantics; or, more pretentiously to see them as some form of anodyne for the wounds of the cruel world of work in capitalist society. If an uncluttered account seems to leave clubs flat then let it be said that in the main they are. Working Men's Clubs have their moments, but they are if not dull, very ordinary. The anthropological eye may delight in modes and manners,

many of which differ from the bourgeois norm of the anthropologist's own background. However, once the 'shock' has been removed the mesh or texture of relationships is no more pregnant with meaning than in any other setting.

- 5a. An interesting 'puritanism' still persists with connection to women buying drinks. Women, especially in the over 40 age group will rarely go to the bar to buy drinks. Sometimes a surreptitious passing of money to husband, father or boy friend to 'buy' a drink is common. Though women are still broadly 'treated' and the women's contribution is not connected with any obligation to buy drinks. Also, drinks may be purchased for disabled or elderly members (actually getting the drink that is with money provided by the person for whom the favour is being done). This practice is more acceptable to both the old or handicapped person and other men who might otherwise have to do the task. Some women, widows, who become 'characters' or the blatantly 'tartish' will flout this rule. Younger members have little respect for this norm and women will as soon go to the bar to get drinks as men.
6. Raffles and totes - the difference lies in the fact that raffles are based entirely on numbered tickets being purchased and then duplicate numbers are drawn randomly the prize is then exclusive to the person with the numbered ticket which corresponds to the one drawn: totes on the other hand involve choosing numbers from a predetermined series, say 1-25, in any combination. The winners are chosen by drawing the numbers and those (there can be any number) who have the winning combination share the prize.

They are used to collect a random sum of money for a variety of activities. Sometimes they are run by the club as a whole for club purposes or purposes agreed by the committee. Sometimes they are run to obtain finance for an inter-club club such as football, darts or angling. Purposes to which clubs put their funds thus collected may range from providing old people with a Christmas party, some extra cash at Christmas and some system of subsidised drinks all the year; to providing children with a party or trip to the seaside; to giving funds to an outside charity. Most clubs 'adopt' a local or national charity to which they contribute regular amounts produced by their totes and raffles.

7. What constitutes excessive drinking is a complicated matter, a fact often overlooked by many 'do gooding' commentators anxious to show that we are all latent alcoholics and drinking, say four pints a day is a sure sign of its becoming manifest. That apart, factors associated with excessive drinking relate primarily to the 'cultural norms' associated with drinking. In working men's clubs drinking is tolerated to the point which behaviour becomes intolerable, though even here conduct itself must be refracted through a cultural lens both in so far as what is done and what is tolerated. For example working men's clubs are NEVER treated to the gross and assinine responses to drinking which often occur in more middle class settings like rugby clubs, cricket clubs and the like. Here, undressing with a pint of beer on the head to the accompaniment of a song, drinking three dozen eggs, cracked into a bowl, in one

gulp or eating 2lbs of cheese while someone else drinks a pint with a teaspoon are fairly common occurrences. Sobriety and orderly conduct are the order of the day in working men's clubs. They are more 'sober' than most pubs and there is little suggestion of after hours drinking as is more often the case in pubs than is commonly suspected.

8. Norms of this sort can be very fine. In this case after-thoughts before the transaction is complete, i.e. payment made and change given, are tolerated. After this when the member of the bar staff ceases to be in 'scope' after thoughts produce a good deal of annoyance. In contrast middle class people in most lounges consider the member of staff to be in 'scope' for a much longer period. Both before and after the transaction.

CHAPTER 7

THE CLUBS: LEGAL ASPECTS

Like all major institutions in modern Britain, Working Men's Clubs are incorporated into a complicated legal framework. Since the clubs are barely one hundred years old the need for such legislation is of recent date and has developed like other law from both statutes and from decisions made in disputes which have reached the courts.

The legislation which applies to clubs may be broken down into three broad categories:

legislation which applies to clubs as one of a vast number of institutions and, other than in exceptional cases, relates to clubs in exactly the same way that it relates to these other institutions. For example: legislation which applies to food hygiene: Food and Drugs Act 1955; legislation relating to payment of wages: Wages Councils Act 1959.

legislation which relates to a number of specific institutions of which the clubs are one: for example legislation dealing with the sale and consumption of intoxicating drinks: Licensing Act 1964; legislation concerning gambling: the Betting Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963 and the Gaming Act 1968.

legislation which deals mainly with clubs and club like institutions. This type of legislation mainly sets out to clarify the nature of the collectivity and the relationships between members, and between the collectivity and the 'outside' world. The two acts of most interest are: Industrial and Provident Acts 1965 and 1968 and the Friendly Societies Acts 1896-1871.

Of most interest here are the latter two categories. However, the main authority on the whole complicated business lists the following areas of legal interest to clubs. (1) The constitution and management of clubs, the members of the clubs, stewards and other servants, legal proceeding, registration under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act or the Friendly Societies Act, the Licensing Act and Clubs (both in England, Wales and Scotland), Betting, gaming and lotteries, dramatic and musical law, a variety of sundry duties and licences, assessments and valuation for rates, insurances, wage regulations, food and hygiene regulations

along with a miscellaneous group of matters.

If definitions of Working Men's Clubs are sought the two elements must be treated separately, namely 'clubs' and 'working men's'. A club may be defined as:

"A society of persons associated together for the promotion of some common object or objects, other than for the acquisition of gain."

The main legal distinction, which tends to turn on the contractual relationships of the members, is whether the relationship is between themselves or between the members and a second party, for example the club owner. From this the distinction between 'members clubs' and 'propriety and shop clubs' emerges. In members clubs each member on joining the club pays the subscription and thereby enters a contract with each and every other member, the terms of that contract being embedded in the rules of the club. The assets of a members club therefore belong to the members. Usually these are, for the sake of convenience, vested in trustees. In contrast propriety clubs are owned by a person or persons or a company. Each member on joining enters a contract with the proprietor. Thus the assets of the club are not owned by the members and membership does not involve entering a contract with other members. Shop clubs are clubs providing benefits for workmen in connection with a specific workshop, factory, dock, shop or warehouse. Working Men's Clubs are thus 'membership' clubs.

Broadly, nothing distinguishes Working Men's Clubs from other membership clubs except the obvious distinction that the members are working men. However, on this distinction three points may be made. First, since there are no qualifications for membership, other than being vouched for as of good character, any one may join, working man or otherwise.

The admission of women to membership is an obvious difficulty with such a definition. (2) Although admission of women is fairly well controlled. Additionally if 'working man' includes only 'manual working men' then the presence in some clubs of non-manual workers also renders the above doubtful.

Second it may be noted that 'working men', in the more 'manual' sense may be present in abundance in, for example rugby or football clubs, or even in clubs, the class background of which may connote a more middle-class membership for example Conservative and Unionist Clubs. (3)

Thirdly, and most importantly since in some senses it incorporates the previous two points, the notion of working men as men who work, leads nowhere. The sociological implications lie in the embedded assumptions of 'class' and the institutions and relations which are covered by this term. As will have been seen from the foregoing this matter has vast ramifications and has attracted much attention from writers and sociologists alike.

Definitions of working men's clubs are thus difficult to come by. Section 49(4)(a) of the Licensing Act 1964 suggests that a working men's club is:

"...a club which is, as regards its purposes, qualified for registration as a working men's club under the friendly societies act 1896 and is a registered society within the meaning of that act and the Industrial Provident Societies Act 1893".

Which like many definitions gets little beyond a definition which makes clubs 'work' within the law.

Another definition (the only other?) is in section 8 of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, which defines the purposes of clubs which may qualify it for registration under the Act:

"The following societies may be registered under the Act:

- (4) Societies (in the Act called working men's clubs) for purposes of social intercourse, mutual helpfulness, mutual and moral improvement and rational recreation..." (4)

In practice working men's clubs are working men's clubs and are governed by the rules to which members assent on becoming members. The management of clubs is vested in an elected committee of members whose powers and duties must be defined in the rules. Elected committees are defined in the Licensing Act 1964 the requirements of which are met if the club is registered under either of the Acts mentioned above.

The detailed and complicated legislation relating to clubs need not detain us here except for some of the legislation in categories two and three above. Specifically that legislation which defines clubs as distinct from similar institutions, and that which deals with the specifically collectivist aspects of the clubs. In the main this latter refers to the registration of clubs under the Industrial and Provident Act and the Friendly Societies Act; those laws which control the sale of alcoholic drinks namely the Licensing Act 1964; legislation relating to betting and gaming, the Betting and Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963 and the Gaming Act 1968. Most working men's clubs are registered under one or other of the above acts which broadly speaking confer 'corporate existence', the main advantages of which are:

certain privileges under the Licensing Act 1968. See below.

the club, as distinct from individual members, may sue and be sued.

no individual officer, member, trustee or servant is responsible for a club's debts.

simplified procedures for making officers account for and deliver up club property in their custody.

These 'benefits' seem to derive from the need to exempt clubs from the confusions which would arise from the application of rules relating to or governing the relationship between individuals, to organisations owned collectively. Clubs differ from pubs in respect to the 'sale' of liquor since the stock of liquor in a club is 'vested in the members' and this is normally the case with working men's clubs. Since the members of the club own the liquor then no 'sale' takes place between the club and its members. The rules of the club allow for the purchase of liquor and its distribution between members at fixed prices; the profits from these transactions being applied to the general purposes of the club. The clubs 'supply' or 'distribute' liquor and do not 'sell' it. Given this the club is excepted from the need to be licensed and need only apply for registration. In this way the club is not 'licensed premises' and certain rules which apply to these do not apply to clubs. For example, those referring to the admission of children. The rules relating to the 'sale' or 'supply' of liquor raises some complications which are discussed below.

The law relating to betting and gaming and lotteries is complicated and cautious (5) with respect to clubs. Briefly betting may not be conducted on club premises and clubs are recommended to refuse membership to bookmakers. Some privileges are extended to clubs with respect to gaming activities but few working men's clubs are involved in games beyond cards, dominoes for small stakes between members, and bingo. Gaming machines, present in all clubs, are restricted to two and must show the percentage payout. In contrast to clubs there is less restriction on the amount that machines may pay out: in some cases this may be £100

or more. Trivial lotteries and raffles take place in all clubs the proceeds from which often being devoted to the support of specific clubs within the club, for example darts or angling.

GENERAL RULES

All clubs affiliated to the Working Men's Club and Institute Union Ltd., the central organising, if not controlling body, are guided by a set of formal rules which both satisfy the law and provide a framework for the clubs' activities. As has been said clubs are distinctive in that they are 'owned' by the membership and this 'collectivist' aspect of them requires that they be organised and controlled by a set of formally agreed rules. The rules governing the activities and procedures of the club are so important that:

"Every member on election shall be given a copy of the rules..." (6)

The objects of the club laid down in these rules are:

"...to afford to its members the means of social intercourse, mutual helpfulness, mental and moral improvement, and rational recreation..." (7)

To become a member and obtain the benefits of the club:

"A candidate for election must sign an application for membership and deposit the full amount payable for one share..." (8)

Further:

"The candidate must be proposed and seconded by two financial members, able from personal knowledge to vouch for his respectability and fitness to be a member..." (9)

In practice membership is governed more by the popularity of the club than the rigid application of this rule. When vacancies exist it is normally only necessary for any two members, whether they know the potential member or not, as a formality to propose and second a person. Membership is then endorsed by the elected committee. When clubs are popular lengthy waiting lists facilitate the more formal

application of the rule to secure more partial selection of members.

Since the club is controlled by its members the normal democratic (10) procedures to carry out this control are adopted. A number of elected officers and members from a committee which:

"...shall control the management of the club, and shall have exclusive power to engage or dismiss a steward and other servants. It shall have power to purchase such articles and do all such things as it may deem necessary for carrying out the objects of the club." (11)

As an elected body it can of course be removed by:

"...the votes of two thirds of the members present at a special meeting called for the purpose...." (12)

The rules thus specify the formal procedures for the election and conduct of the committee. While power is ostensibly in the hands of this committee, and as far as can be ascertained policy does rest here, the day-to-day running of the club rests with the specific elected officials. These officials are elected by club members from those nominated for the various positions. There are usually three trustees appointed for five years. Additionally the president, vice-president and secretary are elected by ballot for the conduct of which, strict and formal rules are laid down. The secretary is of primary importance since he deals with the day-to-day administration including:

"...maintaining upon the club premises a register of the names and addresses of the club members, and a subscription book in which will be recorded the payment of such members." (13)

Additionally he:

"...shall carry out the directions of the committee... and prepare and send to the registrar once in every year...the annual return required by the friendly societies Act together with a statement of the number of members in the form prescribed by the chief registrar..." (14)

The matter of the subscription book is of some importance since:

"The subscription must be paid before the member is entitled to any of the privileges of the club." (15)

And:

"Any member who has not paid his subscription twenty-eight days after it shall become due shall be considered in arrears and if not paid within twenty-eight days thereafter he shall cease to be a member. No member in arrears shall be permitted to use the club or be considered a financial member for the purpose of these rules." (16)

That the matter of subscription is important is indicated by the following:

"A person whose membership has ceased by this case shall not again be nominated for membership unless he previously pays all arrears due from him at the time of ceasing to be a member, and such fine or fee as the committee may, in their discretion determine," (17)

Some concession to harder times, and the only indication in the rules of the type of life, and the club's association with it, of the members, is to be found in:

"The committee on receiving information that any member is unable to pay his subscription owing to want of work or other good cause may at its discretion excuse payment..." (18)

Control of membership is important and in addition to failing to pay subscriptions a person may cease to be a member by resigning, which need not detain us here, or more dramatically by 'expulsion'. The powers of the officers and committee are, in this matter, complete:

"The secretary or president shall have power to order the withdrawal from the club premises of any member who misconducts himself, and such a member shall have no right of re-entry to club premises until summoned to meet the committee." (19)

Who then:

"...have power to reprimand, suspend (for a period not exceeding twelve months) or expel any member who shall infringe any rule or by-law or whose conduct, whether within the club house or elsewhere, shall in their opinion render him unfit for membership..." (20)

Rights of appeal exist but there is no specification as to precisely what constitutes misconduct. However in practice the following would to a more or less degree invoke some action: fighting or expressions of belligerence, excessive drunkenness, stealing, breach of swearing norms, (21) transgression of accepted sexual mores (22). In some clubs, especially in summer, children and their lack of control may present some problems (23).

Perhaps the core activity, if not the most important (24), is drinking, and here of course rules are to be found. In the main these rules derive from the fact that the clubs 'supply' drinks to members rather than 'sell' drink to the public as is the case with public houses etc. This would pose no problem if the club did not offer hospitality to non-members or members of other clubs as the guests of members. The rules on this point are clear:

"Should any visitor introduced by a member or an Associate pay for intoxicating liquor, he shall at once be removed from the club premises." (25)

Or:

"...no guest shall be permitted to make any payment for intoxicating liquor, directly or indirectly..." (26)

The entry of guests is controlled by the simple device of, in many cases, a doorman whose function it is to vet applicants for guest status and to point out the rules and conduct the formalities; and in all cases by signing them in:

"The visitor and member or Associate introducing him shall sign their names in a book kept for the purpose." (27)

A nominal charge of a few pence normally accompanies this procedure.

While these rules are often informally 'overlooked' the problems of the status of guests is solved by the adoption

of the device of 'affiliation'. By virtue of shares held by the club in the Working Men's Club and Institute Union Ltd. members are entitled on the payment of a small fee to enter any other clubs so affiliated. Thus:

"So long as the club shall remain a member of the union associates of the union shall...be admitted to the club premises, and intoxicating liquor may be sold to them by or on behalf of the club for consumption on the premises." (28)

The rules mentioned above tend to be the ones which provide the framework for the majority of the members. The remainder of the code is devoted to such matters as the conduct of elections, the convening of meetings and the control and organisation of club finance. All of which matters are of more direct concern to the committee and the officers of the club. An important servant in the club is the steward. Prohibited from being a member of the club he serves, the steward is responsible to the committee for running the club. That is serving and controlling whatever is sold in the club and apart from some legal differences vis a vis his relationship with the employer his role is almost exactly similar to that of a publican. He is of course, apart from the case of the very smallest of clubs, a full time employee of the club, normally the only one, whose wages usually include an element for his wife, and free accommodation, lighting and heating. (29)

Little further comment is required at this point though, from a sociological point of view that law relating to clubs may repay study. (30) In the main the rules seem to be designed to secure the exclusiveness of clubs, which makes them distinct from pubs which in many respects serve similar functions, while allowing some ease of access when this is required. They also contribute to a solution of

the problems of organisation and control peculiar to collectively owned organisations by an elaborate system of delegating power and authority to elected committees of members.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The basis for the following is: R.C.B. HOPKINS: 500 Points in Club Law, 15th edition, Club and Institute Union Ltd; 1975.
2. Women members are permitted in almost all clubs and in the clubs under discussion no part of the club is designated 'men only'. In fact many clubs have ladies' nights, generally devoted to bingo or darts, organised by lady members, and for whom parts of the premises may be given over. The admission of lady members is specifically provided for in most club rules. For example:

"A lady may, upon nomination by a financial member, and election by the committee become a member of the club."

Normally the subscription is lower than for men and:

"Lady members shall not be entitled to attend general meetings or vote at elections and shall not be eligible to hold office or propose or second candidates for office or introduce visitors."

Further:

"Lady members shall be subject to such separate regulations as the committee may from time to time make regarding lady members."

This prescription of the activities of women in working men's clubs is by no means complete. I have come across at least one club in which women are admitted, on the payment of the full subscription, as fully participating members of the club.

How the Sex Discrimination Act applies to working men's clubs is not yet clear but that women can be refused membership by virtue of being women is implied by:

"The number of persons admitted to membership under this rule (i.e. the rule admitting lady members) shall not result in their being significant in proportion to the total membership."

Some clue to the position of women in respect of Sex Discrimination legislation may be found, by analogy with the position of radical groups since:

"It is not unlawful under the race relations Act 1968 for a club which employs a bona fide procedure for electing members (involving a nomination, a proposer and seconder and a genuine process of selectivity) openly to refuse to elect a person as a member on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic and national origins, because such a club does not provide facilities and services to 'the public or section of the public as defined in section 2(1) of the Race Relations Act 1968.'"

3. One such club with which I am familiar Atherstone Unionist Club is not with respect to membership, activities or general occupational background of the members markedly different from a Working Men's Club. It even lacks the air of respectable and faintly superior pomposity which often marks Conservative Clubs in more middle class areas.
4. This is incorporated in all club rules in order to qualify for registration as a charity under the Friendly Societies Act or the Industrial Provident Act, and represents an agreed form of wording under these acts. Historically it represents the idealised view of how clubs should be organised and probably never bore any relationship to how clubs were perceived by the working class membership. Clubs were to be allowed, were in fact necessary as a means of social control, as long as they were respectable. A point missed by Norman DENNIS, Fernando HENRIQUES and Clifford SLAUGHTER; Coal is Our Life, Tavistock 2nd ed; 1969, p.143 when they make a sneering comment about the lack of congruence between these stated aims and the actual activities of the club.
5. Presumably there is no desire to make Working Men's Clubs attractive alternatives for gambling and gaming.

In contrast to the bye law spartan betting shop. Once again a rule which reflects the concern that the middle class and their representatives, in framing legislation, have had for the control of gambling, especially in the working class: something must not be had for nothing.

6. Quotations from rules will be confined to two clubs only: Glascote Working Men's Club which is registered under the Friendly Societies Act and Kettlebrook Working Men's Club and Institute registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. For convenience references will be confined to the following convention: Glascote or Kettlebrook followed by the rule number.
7. Glascote 1; Kettlebrook 1.
8. Glascote 2; Kettlebrook 7.
9. Glascote 2; Kettlebrook 7.
10. 'Normal democratic' in the sense that they adopt certain procedures, e.g. nominations, proposings, seconding of officials for election, secret ballots by members, etc., and finally the deligation of authority and power to the committee appointed by this procedure. In this these clubs do not differ markedly from trade unions or other formal organisations responsible for large numbers of members. Nor for that matter, other than on point of size, from the practices involved in the election of governments in the so-called 'democracies'. Notions of a more 'participatory' democracy are almost entirely absent - beyond the almost universal suggestion box procedure where, once again, the procedure becomes a substitute for what it is intended to achieve. The fact that members may make suggestions is enough, the

fact that a formally elected oligarchy has the power to veto such suggestions is largely ignored. In fact more informal means of making suggestions or complaints exists in the form of merely talking to a member of the committee. All of which raises the question of the committee as almost self perpetuating oligarchies. In many clubs men have been on the committee for twenty or thirty years. Often a source of tension when changes in the demographic and occupational structure of the club introduces a new type of membership.

In practice a strange relationship exists between the committee, as the designated authority within the club, and the officers who are members. Individual officers will refuse to act in certain circumstances unless the action is endorsed by the committee, on other occasions the committee will be reluctant to act leaving decisions to an officer or trustee. The complicated means by which this regulating mechanism works is beyond the scope of this essay and would in any event require extensive knowledge impossible to gain other than as a fully participating member as an officer or committee man in at least one club. The amusing - perhaps more to middle class people not accustomed to committees on quite the scale that many working class people are - is captured by the comedian Colin Crompton in the Television programme *The Wheel Tappers and Shunters Club* where reference to 'the committee' was a continuing source of humour. It may be noted in passing, at the risk of being precious that the whole programme was more in line with popular prejudices about clubs than the reality.

11. Glascote 10(i); Kettlebrook 19(i).

12. Glascote 10(ii); Kettlebrook 19(ii).
13. Glascote 16(i); Kettlebrook 20 (iv).
14. *ibid.*
15. Glasctoe 3; Kettlebrook 10.
16. Glascote 3; Kettlebrook 11.
17. Glascote 3. *ibid.*
18. *ibid.* A matter of increasing concern with high unemployment. The extent to which this concession is taken up is difficult to ascertain.
19. Glascote 24; Kettlebrook 14.
20. Glascote 25; Kettlebrook 15.
21. An interesting one this since the norms follow a fairly bourgeois pattern. The primary rule seems to be that 'work place' language stuffed with a host of epithets is rarely used in the club, except low voiced amongst intimates. Most swearing before women is regarded as especially reprehensible. The matter is however complicated by a hierarchy of profanity as it were, that is, some expressions would be regarded as more undesirable than others. Thus if we divide profanities into three broad categories: blasphemous, lavatorial and sexual, we find different responses to each. Blasphemy would, other than to the most religiously sensitive, be regarded as usable in all circumstances. However, only in a pure form: 'God almighty', 'Christ', etc. Combined with other expressions they would be regarded as especially obscene. Lavatorial profanities are regarded somewhat ambiguously and usage is very contingent and circumstantial. Mainly regarded as usable with discretion in most circumstances. Sexual profanity referring to anatomical details of sexual behaviour is,

except for certain words (as a matter of fact the range of words is very small and is rarely used with imagination or insight deriving I think from the strength of the taboo) confined to the sphere of intimates. In front of women the taboo on this type of language is complete. Searing on formal occasions, purchasing drinks, dealings with committees or officials, announcements, etc. is normally out of the question. The use of sexual profanities on any scale other than amongst intimates would almost certainly lead to a reprimand and continuance to expulsion. Often these taboos are used in a manner similar to Goffmans 'looping'. A complaint to an officer, member of the committee or the steward accompanied by normally "acceptable" language may call forth criticism of the language and an ignoring of the complaint: '...well, if you are going to use that sort of language...'.

It is worth noting that much innuendo, especially of a sexual kind, is permitted either with or without the presence of women - in fact the presence of women gives a piquant additional tension and deepens the humour - ranging from the 'dirty post card' pinned up in almost every club, sent by members on holiday, to clever, subtle and inventive breaches of the taboos showing a remarkable and fine perception of the elliptical nature of the norms.

An exception to the above is the word 'bastard' which does not fall easily into any of the three categories. It can be used innocuously to mean 'you rogue' - the notion that someone has put one over on someone. Or more venomously to describe a third party, often a sup-

erious in a particular social setting, as being bad, dislikable, undesirable and given to ignoring the claims of others. Used in a more serious argument and with overtones closer to its original meaning 'bastard' remains a gross insult guaranteed to produce violent rejoinders.

For younger people, in their late teens and early twenties, especially among the unmarried, no such niceties exist. Swearing, with no words being excepted, is quite normal among and by both sexes. Nor is this more than casually remarked upon by older members who would not do the same.

22. My observations on this point are poor. However norms seem to follow bourgeois practice. The main complication is sexual encounters which involve one or married couples connected with the club. In the main the general rule is not to be found out. Officials or stewards involved here would no doubt suffer some form of sanction. In one case a steward caught in flagrante was sacked!
23. Since clubs are not licensed premises children are allowed in although in most circumstances the normal rules respecting drinks apply. In some cases however, young people of sixteen are allowed to become members and to purchase drinks. The presence of children pose little problem and high levels of tolerance are extended to them. However, at certain times of the year - holidays in the main - the numbers of children in clubs may cause problems. One club has a notice restricting children to those of members only, and many designate times and rooms for them.
24. Taken as a whole drinking represents the *raison d'être* of the club even in the minimal sense that more members

will participate in this than any other single activity. However, for many bingo (especially for women), fruit machines or a variety of sporting activities may be as, if not more, important. It remains the case that many, if not all clubs, rely financially on the proceeds of gambling and not on proceeds from the bar. The main forms being totes - members select numbers in combination from a specified range, i.e. 1 to 25 and two of these are drawn randomly, often with much ceremony, Members with the winning combination get a prize. In one club I visited this form of gambling raised £200 per week, £175 of which were redistributed in prizes. Additionally there is bingo which needs no further explanation. The most important single gambling activity is however the fruit machine. Club balance sheets will in all cases show substantial amounts under this heading even in the smallest clubs. Even the Conservative Club is not immune though they refer rather coyly to 'proceeds from members gaming'! Most clubs have the two machines allowed by law for which they pay a licence of £150 per week and whatever servicing arrangements are available. Profits can range from £3-4000 in smaller clubs to £10-15000 in larger clubs. Such is the importance of these machines that without them, or at least the money spent on them, many clubs would find real difficulty in continuing. Interesting perhaps and a comment on the tension between individualism and collectivism inevitable inherent in capitalist society. Asked to contribute on anything like this scale to the club money would hardly be forthcoming. Against this is the fact that the machines, and other gambling activities have

the dual function of contributing to the continuence of the collectivity on the one hand and redistributing resources between individual members on the other.

25. Glascote 28; Kettlebrook 33.

26. *ibid.*

27. Glascote 27; Kettlebrook 32.

28. Glascote 7; kettlebrook 11.

29. The stewards' income and other facilities vary greatly with the size of the club. In the clubs under study wages vary between £3000 and £6000 with the additions for free accommodation and services mentioned earlier. The steward is almost always from the local community and working class in the sense that he has been a manual worker. Ancilliary workers, mainly bar staff, are employed, often routinely in large clubs on special occasions in smaller ones.

30. Especially if this were approached historically when it may be possible to plot the points at which clubs and their growth conflicted with existing interests. The brewers, the Inland Revenue (especially with regard to rating of clubs), property laws and anti-drinking movements spring to mind in addition to the problem of gambling mentioned above.

CHAPTER 8

THE CLUBS: THE PLACE:

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE GROWTH OF TAMWORTH

Working Men's Clubs arrived in many areas as well established working class institutions. Such is the case in Tamworth. Here the earliest clubs were not founded until 1907, and the latest was not founded until 1928. (1) In some areas, probably London, the Working Men's Clubs played a distinctive part in the formation of an adaptive working class culture. In other areas different circumstances created differing responses. Thus Tamworth is an area in which the Working Men's Clubs were grafted onto working class life as late additions and as confirmations of the existence of an autonomous working class culture. A culture in which the working class were to provide for their own felt needs in their own way.

An account of the history of Tamworth must therefore proceed in terms of the emergence of a distinctive way of life in which bourgeois values of the mid/late nineteenth century were adapted to accommodate a distinctive working-class experience.

The starting point of an understanding of the history of Tamworth is the decay of the 'old society' and the relationships embedded in it, and the superimposition of the new values of the new industrialism and its new relationships. Despite the incursions of Sir Robert PEEL into the industrial life of Tamworth in the 1790's, the process of industrialisation was relatively slow in Tamworth. When it came in the shape of coal industry in the 1840's and 1850's and was to have a profound effect on the town and the texture of social relationships.

The national context for changing Tamworth was the overarching values of entrepreneurial capitalism - based at first on an uneasy relationship between the gentry and the emerg-

ing middle class, it was to have by the middle of the nineteenth century an unquestionable base in bourgeois ideology and control by the middle class, in firm alliance with the upper classes. After 1842, any pretence at a community of interest between the working class and the middle class had gone, and this provided the context for their separate development. It is to this that I now wish to turn.

Through the control of the means of production and thereby control of effective power, there emerges a privileged class - perhaps more accurately a number of privileged groups in the shape of the industrial entrepreneurial class itself and also its many servants - committed to an ideology which at once served to justify their position and the position of the lower classes. Thus we have, in Parkin's terms, a 'dominant value system':

"...the social source of which is the major institutional order. This is the moral framework which promotes the endorsement of existing inequality..." (2)

This dominant value system will be diffused throughout the whole society and imposed on the subordinate classes who will view the reward system in either differential (3) or aspirational terms. This diffusion and imposition will be achieved, not only by control of the means of production and hence economic relations, but through the control of the ideological apparatus of the society, in the shape of the Church, educational system and the mass media, and through the agents of social control, the civic apparatus and the local implementation of the law. (4)

Below this group will be a much larger group of the under-privileged. Property-less, relying solely on their labour and receiving less than an equitable share of social and

economic rewards. This group gives rise to what Engels describes as:

"the social division of society into innumerable gradations, each recognised without question, each with its own pride but also its inborn respect for its 'betters'." (5)

This is important since it points to the possibility of the emergence of a diversity of sub-groups within the unprivileged groups (6), also to the essential duality of their position in that they will have a sense of 'themselves' as a distinct social entity - 'their own pride' but also an over-riding consciousness of their relationship with the dominant group - 'respect for their betters'. This sense of subordination, combined with a common set of economic experiences, provides the basis for the emergence of sub-groups within this broad class. Thus these groups will be based on similar life chances, types of work, income and expenditure patterns. Despite subtle gradations of difference there will be a tendency for these groups to perceive a common situation and there will emerge what Parkin calls the 'subordinate value system'

"the social source of which is the local working class community. This is a moral framework which promotes accommodative responses to the facts of inequality and low status." (7)

While the subordinate value system will provide the over-riding set of ideological references, there will be, nevertheless, individual sub-systems of success and reward. The subordinate value system will serve to help individuals and groups to accommodate to experience of deprivation. The fragmentation within it will help to maintain the authority of the dominant group since it will increase the tendency of the underprivileged groups to compare themselves with others in a like position rather than with the priv-

ileged group.

Foster suggests that this tendency to compare with those in roughly the same position is heightened by physical separation of the classes. (8) Urban development in the nineteenth century was characterised by this increasing separation of the classes and thus gave rise to the threat posed by a working class developing without the benefit of appropriate role models from the dominant class.

Perhaps the Victorians worried needlessly since, as has been suggested, in the main, this separate development increased comparison with peers not with superiors. The basis of this process is suggested by Runciman:

"A person's satisfactions...are conditioned by his expectations, and the proverbial way to make oneself conscious of one's advantages is to contrast one's position with others worse off than oneself...if people have no reason to expect or hope for more than they achieve they will be less discontented with what they have...but if on the other hand, they have been led to see as possible goal the relative prosperity of some more fortunate community with which they can directly compare themselves, they will remain discontented with their lot." (9)

Thus, it is argued, the emergence of sub-groups in the working class allows this process of making comparison with selective referents, and thereby achieve some accommodation to low status to take place. Additional to this process of choosing selective referents, and thereby making no substantial challenge to the dominant value system, it is necessary to explain how the underclass responds to the contradictions which they face between the ideas that derive from the dominant value system and the economic and social realities of their world. It is also necessary to examine the consequences of this response.

Parkin argues that a 'negotiated version' of the dominant value system emerges. That is the dominant value system

is not resisted or opposed, but modified as a response to the circumstances of restricted opportunity which forms the basis for the subordinate class. This point is elaborated by Rodman:

"By value stretch I mean that lower class persons, without abandoning the values of society, develop an alternative set of values...Lower class persons in close interaction with each other and faced with similar problems do not long maintain a commitment to middle class values that cannot attain, and they do not continue to respond to others in a rewarding or punishing way simply on the basis of whether these others are living up to middle class values. In this way they need not be continually frustrated by their failure to live up to unattainable values...with a low degree of commitment to the dominant middle class values..." (10)

Thus the subordinate value system, fragmented within itself existing in the context of a dominant value system emerges. The degree of fragmentation of the working class community will, to a large extent, be related to the degree of fragmentation in the local economic system. Where the local economic system is based on one, or not more than two, occupations, then it is argued, a more unitary and homogeneous working class culture will exist based on a common experience of work: rewards, working conditions, control of the work process, relations with employers, etc. This will, especially where an element of geographical isolation is present, give rise to a proletarian/traditional working-class culture. This will provide a more unified support for the subordinate value system which will, in its turn, give rise to greater self awareness on the part of the subordinate group. An ideology will be developed in which the manual workers contribution to society, not highly regarded by the dominant value system and ranked low in social honour, will be accorded a position of honour in the hierarchy of esteem. Additionally, this will, since comparison will now be more

likely to be made between the subordinate group and the dominant group rather than within the subordinate group only, give rise to a potentially conflictual situation. This conflict will be expressed, not only in overt conflict in the shape of strikes and lock outs, but also claims to control the local institutional structure in the shape of local government and other semi-legal positions in the community. This will also be accompanied by the emergence of specific institutions based on the shift of emphasis derived from the 'stretched' value system. One important shift of emphasis which takes place is that from individual success and self help to collective self help. This gives rise to such institutions as: Trade Unions, Labour Party, Freindly Societies, Working Men's Clubs and in some cases the elaboration of extensive kinship networks. (11) This collectivism, it should be emphasised, is of an instrumental secular kind, it is not the suggestion that it represents any long term ideological commitment. As Parkin says:

"A no less important element in the accommodative outlook is the instrumental collectivism...Organised labour directs its main efforts towards a greater share of resources for its members - not by challenging the existing framework of rules but by working within this framework. In this respect it is reasonable to regard Trade Unionism and instrumental collectivism as an accommodative response to inequality." (12)

It is the purpose of the following short account of the town of Tamworth to show the process outlined above at work. Namely the emergence of a subordinate, accommodative working class culture, located in the context of a dominant set of values, which derived sufficient support from radical value system to lead to some measure of control at the local level.

The history of the town of Tamworth in South Staffordshire is unique only to the extent that its events are specific to the place. In its transition from the one time centre of Mercia and the seat of Offa, through its charter as a medieval market town and prosperous 16th and 17th century borough, into its present day industrial community, it follows closely the genesis of English society as a whole. As to do its present day concerns with population, economic development, transport, a sense of its own identity and links with the past, follow many of the concerns of English society today.

Like many other places it has no lack of historians in the shape of earnest, committed citizens, given to diligent research in an attempt to delineate for posterity those features of the town's development which they consider to be important and to have an impact on the present character of the town. In the main these accounts are concerned with the doings of the groups who held social and economic power in the community. Little effort has been expended on the life of the lower classes or in attempts to understand the 'texture of social relations'. Similarly the social and economic history has been largely ignored. The working class or lower class is rarely mentioned other than to indicate the good will and philanthropy of the rich and powerful or when the working class is troublesome, as in the case of their being so poor as to need help from the parish, or when they strike for better pay and conditions. It is no part of my intention to write social and economic history of Tamworth or to enter into a detailed account of the growth of the town. My main concern is a fairly short account of the growth of Tamworth as the background

to the Working Men's Clubs in the area.

The main intention of this account is to deal with two related matters. One is to try to get at some idea of the 'texture of social relation' and how, over a period of time, this has changed. The other is what may be called the 'problem of power'. Thus the fact which stands out above all others in the history of Tamworth is the emergence of a local ambience which is essentially working class and a shift in the distribution of power in the community to the working class. The predominantly working class character of the town may be seen from the following figures.

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE AND RETIRED MALES AGED 15+
BY SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP

	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Professional Workers	28	2.4
Employers and Managers	93	8.1
Foremen, skilled manual workers, and own account workers other than professional.	542	47.2
Non-manual workers	120	10.4
Personal service workers, semi-skilled manual workers and agricultural workers	285	24.8
Unskilled manual workers	69	6.0
Armed forces and inadequately defined	12	-

Register General, 1971.

Thus on the basis of these figures only some 29.9% of the population are non-manual workers in all categories and the remaining 70.1% are manual workers in all categories. One important factor in these figures is the very small number of employers and managers who live in the town, only 8.1%.

The emergence of the importance of the working class represents a shift in the power structure of the town which may be seen simply as follows: the period 1700 to 1850 was dominated by the local land owning class. After the first Reform Act of 1832 the power of this group gradually declined and there emerged a powerful middle class based on the clerical, legal and professional groups helped by the local tradesmen.

After the third Reform Act 1884 working class interest becomes more articulate and the period 1900-1930 sees a decline in the middle class and the almost total control by the working class at least in the civic sense of making the decisions which affect the town. These shifts in the influence of the different groups reflects the changing socio-economic background of the borough and the changed political contexts within which this activity takes place. This in its turn will affect the social relations and ultimately the 'character' of the town.

In the period before the 19th century Tamworth was a small market town serving the needs of the surrounding agricultural population. Trade dominated proceedings in the context of the relationships of patronage and privilege which characterised the 'old society'. As Tamworth began to grow in the latter part of the 18th century, like many other towns, there grew with it a class of urban gentry. Having independent means but insufficient land to locate them in the country this group took up residence in the growing towns for reasons of economy, convenience and sociability. The most numerous and interesting source of this new gentry was the new professionals: lawyers, doctors and later bankers, architects and surveyors. Thus by 1845 there were in

Tamworth one insurance agent, four surgeons, five solicitors in addition to four school masters, four owners of ladies' boarding schools and a variety of trades and tradesmen.

The whole group referred to by Hobsbaum as:

"...the numerous parasites of rural aristocracy - that rural small town world of functionaries and suppliers to nobility and gentry: the traditional somnulent corrupt and increasingly reactionary professions."
(13)

This was a society in which men took their position in an accepted order of precedence and in which life for the majority was a hard struggle for subsistence and poverty was an inescapable fact of life. Between the extremes - the landed gentry and the labouring poor - stretched a long line of middle ranks which made up parallel professional and business hierarchies of an infinity of graduated statuses. In this society men were acutely aware of their exact relationship to the next grade above and below in a formal sense of hierarchy inherited from the medieval world. Power was unquestionably in the hands of the great land lords and their friends and though class was latent in this society in politics, industrial relations and religion it was obscured by powerful bonds of loyalty which prevented its overt expression and in any case any breach of the laws of subordination were ruthlessly suppressed. Position in this society was determined by kind and amount of property and associated patronage. Changes were, however, on the way.

When T.H. Green visited Tamworth in 1864 to report on the endowed school for the Schools Enquiry Commission he observed that the Town:

"...is the natural capital of a considerable district, with wealthy farmers and some large collieries."

This indicates the dual nature of the town in mid 19th

century as a market town and a growing industrial centre. This same duality is reflected in the account of the town to be found in the work of Palmer, a local historian, who, writing in 1845 gives a clear picture of the economic activities of the town:

"The greater part of the inhabitants, depend for subsistence, however directly or indirectly, upon the cultivation of the soil...fifty carters alone are employed in conveying the produce to Birmingham alone ...cotton spinning and calico printing in the neighbourhood is under the able superintendence of Sir Robert Peel. The principal manufactories in the town and neighbourhood are the tape mills of Mr. Harding and Mr. De Hamle. The Castle Mills have been enlarged and are used for the manufacture of paper. The fabrication of hats, cord and string and the process of dyeing are carried out..." (14)

That Peel got down to work quickly is indicated by the following entry in the Parish Records for 1790:

"Mr. Robert Peel became seized of lands near the borough ...very soon after these transactions a cotton mill was erected at Fazeley and the castle and the Castle Mills used by Messrs. PEEL and Co. for the purpose of printing callicoe..."

This early period of gradual industrialisation seems in Tamworth to have been relatively peaceful if the following extract from a memorandum to the parish records for 1800 is any guide:

"The scarcity of the proceeding year was much increased by the failure of the crops again this Autumn...tumults and insurrection broke out in most of the midland counties...They were soon happily suppressed without much mischief..."

The next most important event in the industrial growth of the town, and arguably the most important was the development of the coal industry. Out of this the 'working class' character of the town emerged, this industry was the focus of the most conflict and on its decline had stamped its mark on the face of the town.

The first shafts of the most important pits in the North Warwickshire area, Pooley Hall, near Polesworth, were sunk

in 1848. This was the beginning of the establishment of coal mining as a local industry, for the purpose of trade as distinct from the production for local domestic use. Mention of the coal mining in the area is of very early date, the earliest being in 1586. Further mentions of mining occur in the parish registers from 1609 to 1620. A lease to a Thomas Seymour in 1694 mentions coal mining and the antiquarian Dr. Stuckley mentioned coal when he visited the area in 1725. In 1794 there were mines in a number of surrounding villages. Problems of transport slowed down early development but this was partly solved by the construction of the Coventry Canal in 1787/8 which for some years carried most of the coal and provided work for local hauliers. Further development on the outside of the town led to the construction of the railway - the Trent Valley - London Railway was begun in 1845 and completed in 1847, this in its turn led to more development. A point which should be noted about this development is that it took place outside of the town of Tamworth and the town itself had been largely unaffected by the industrial development of the early period of industrial growth. In addition to the coal mining there was also clay works, pipe works and brick works, although at its best the coal industry employed almost half of the employed workers of Tamworth.

This period in Tamworth, as was the country as a whole, was marked by a number of significant changes in social relationships. At the most general level the change from rural to industrial activity was marked by a change in time and work discipline. As Hobsbawm says:

"Industrial labour...imposes a regularity, routine and monotony quite unlike pre-industrial rhythms of work, which depend on the variations of the seasons, the

weather, and the vagaries of men and animals. Industry brings the tyranny of the clock. Pace setting machines life measured not in seasons but in minutes..." (15)

Also at the general level there was the breakdown of the pre-industrial organic relations based on stable relationships, rooted in reciprocal rights and duties. These gave way gradually to relationships based on the sale of labour and duty was discharged by the payment of wages. These changes, alongside the poverty and uncertainty which early wage labour contained were felt most by the labouring classes. Tamworth did not have its Engels, nor as far as I can tell an even moderately interested commentator on the impact of the early phase of industrialisation in the Town. What it did have however was a high death rate, which, following the Public Health Act 1848, prompted the attention of a special Board of Health enquiry. (16)

Published in 1853 the report gives a vivid picture of the life of the Tamworth poor in mid 19th century. The report is divided into two parts. An account of the tour of the area by the inspector and the results of the evidence given at a public enquiry. In both cases the 'better off' either visited the 'poor' or commented on their condition.

In his tour of the town the inspector William Less was accompanied by: Rev. Edward HARSTON, Vicar, William KNIGHT, Mayor, Francis WILLINGTON, Town Clerk, Rev. William PARKINSON, Presbyterian Minister, John MATTHEWS, agent for Sir Robert PEEL, John SHAW, solicitor, John WOODY, surgeon, Etienne De HAMEL, Mill Owner, John WRIGHT, solicitor, Thomas ARGYLE, Clerk to the Magistrates, Alfred WATTON, House Steward to Sir Robert PEEL, Isaac BRADBURY, maltster, Charles CLARSON, builder and Thomas BROSTER, Surveyor of Highways. This list is included to give some idea of the type of middle

class person who formed the ruling group in the town and who took it upon themselves to 'inspect' the poor in an attempt to elicit the 'causes' of the high death rate amongst them.

The report starts with an account of the death rate:

"...it is shown that in the early part of the 18th century the death rate was 25/1000 while at the close of the century it was equal to 19.3/1000..."

In 1841 the death rate was 20.52, rising to 27.00 in 1846 after a slight fall in 1847 it gradually rose to 28.80 in 1851. Mid-century Tamworth was an unhealthy place. Comparison in the report confirms this. The average death rate of 61 whole registration districts was 16.01 while the average age of death was 37.5. In PENKRIDGE a town not far from Tamworth and of similar size and character death rate was 15.24 and the average age of death was 37.9. The average age of death in Tamworth from 1841-47 was 33.5 and from 1847-53, 31.5. That this high death rate and low average age at death was associated with the poverty and squalor in which the working class were forced to live is made evident in the report. Evidence from Thomas SHARPLESS surgeon:

"I have observed, from local causes, such as open cess-pools and crowded courts, low fever arise...there has been high mortality in Tamworth in the last year due to small-pox...small-pox was aggravated by the crowded state of the rooms and badly constructed dwellings. Small-pox made its appearance amongst those residents in courts, and amongst this class it chiefly prevailed..." (17)

Further evidence from John Francis WOODY, surgeon:

"Numerous little houses of an inferior class, on most objectionable principles and unhealthy situation, have been run up, in which the poor, by force of circumstances, are driven to reside...THE POOR HAVE BEEN THE SUFFERERS. It is a fact that the opulent classes are not much affected by, indeed they almost escape, the diseases that prevail so violently among the poor..." (18)

That the poor, and their diseases were separated from the rest

of the town is implied by the following quotation from the report. Another surgeon, Robert Cave BROWN:

"There are certain localities in Tamworth where cases of typhus, small-pox, scarlet fever or any other epidemic will last longer and be more virulent. (He goes on to specify the localities and says)...I do not consider them to be naturally unhealthy but they are made so by being confined in their back premises, having foul privies, open pits for the night soil, with numerous pigsties...and the whole premises with bad drainage...." (19)

With Victorian thoroughness and an eye for the sensational which revealed the intrinsic inadequacy of the 'lower orders' in coping with the demands of life, the inspector gives some vivid accounts of the conditions in which Tamworth poor lived, and the factors which he sees as being correlated with the high incidence of disease.

The picture which emerges from the report is of a town awash with ordure, filled with manure heaps and pigsties, which in combination seemed sufficient explanation of the poor health of the borough:

"That in proportion to the number of inhabitants there is a greater number of swine kept in Tamworth than any other town I have visited; that the keeping and feeding of these animals is most disgusting to the senses, and under the present defective sanitary arrangements, swine cannot be kept without injuring the health of human beings in the vicinity...many pigsties, receptacles for pigwash, privies with open and undrained soil-pits and large accumulations of dung and manure exist in close contiguity to the dwellings of the poorer inhabitants..." (20)

However, in the course of the report some points are made which give a better indication of the kinds of relationship which existed of which the filth and squalor were a dimension. The following gives some idea of the ownership of the housing:

"Kings-ditch near Mr. Hamels factory (Mr. Hamel accompanied the inspector) - the warm water from Mr. Hamel's factory promoted escape of foul gasses from the ditch and there has been much fever and disease in a row of houses nearby...all the houses, about 26 cottages belong to Sir Robert PEEL - there is one

pump for 19 houses placed within 3 yards of a most offensive privy...the drainage of the premises is very poor and there are many pigsties. There has been much fever in these houses...some houses belong to Doctor PALMER and are the most confined premises I have found in Tamworth...A row of houses in King Street belonging to Sir Robert PEEL have all of them had fever..." (22)

The reference above to Doctor PALMER - a local medical practitioner, antiquarian and, it would seem, property owner, who left Tamworth and medicine to become a monk - indicates the attitudes of the class of people who inherited the benefits of the industrial revolution. In his evidence to the inspector Palmer made the following comment:

"The deaths in my practice have been about 6% of my patients...these have occurred principally in the courts and ill-ventilated, crowded, dirty abodes of the poor...in the worst courts all fevers are liable to assume typhoid form..." (23)

The man of science and observer of the human condition were, it seems, separate from any human assessment of the conditions into which the values of early capitalism had plunged the working class. If the Palmers, Peels, De Hamels, Clarsons and their kind did not mean to brutalise their fellow men or were in ignorance of their conditions matters little, for as Hobsbawm says:

"So far as the victims were concerned the results were as bad...perhaps worse, than if they had been achieved by deliberate cruelty: inhuman, impersonal, callous degradation of the spirit of men and women, and destruction of their dignity...any historian who fails to see this is not worth reading...." (24)

As in the rest of England industrialisation in Tamworth gave rise to a newly confident middle class. That this group was not economically homogeneous is evident from the variety of jobs they did. Here we have a non-manual hierarchy stretching from the major servants of the gentry and rich industrialists, the professions of law, medicine through smaller manufacturers and producers, maltsters, market gardeners to the "genteel" occupations of school

master and boarding school owner down to the shop owners, tradesmen and petty entrepreneurs. The homogeneity of the group rested not on its economic activity but on its values and interests. Most of this group would subscribe to a more or less degree to the dominant ideology of provincial utilitarianism, self help, and liberal political economy. That this group 'took over' may be seen by a variety of activity. The Grammar School for example serves as a focus of interest here.

Tamworth Grammar school has a long history and may be one of the oldest schools in the country. In the 17th century the school was fairly prosperous; local people left money for the school and the school master could rely on the community to help with repairs. However, this prosperity gradually declined, partly the result of a number of fools being appointed as masters, and partly due to the increasing irrelevance of the Latin/Greek type of education to the needs of the emerging commerce orientated middle class. The school continued to decline in the early part of the 19th century and by the 1860's had become only used by the children of the poor, middle class support having all but vanished. Under the 1835 Municipal Reform Act trustees had been appointed to look after local charities including that of the Grammar School, mainly in the shape of local gentry and the legal profession. In 1826, the secretary of the Trustees of Tamworth Borough Charities wrote to the secretary of the Charity Commission pointing out that of the original trustees only a few were both alive and functional. He suggested a new panel of trustees which would include a grover, a manufacturer (De Hamel) and a draper, while this composition of the trustees suggests a shift away from control by the

gentry and an interest in education by the tradesmen and new middle class, the suggestion was ignored. Seventeen months later after what local wrangling it is not possible to discover, a further request was made, this time for two sets of trustees: one for the school and the other to look after the remainder of the charities. This request was agreed to and this time a more significant division takes place: a panel of professionals to look after the school, the Vicar, four surgeons, four solicitors and one grocer, while a group of tradesmen took over the rest of the towns charities: a grocer, an auctioneer, a chemist and a draper among them. The middle class was beginning to consolidate its position in the town and needed education for its sons in the shape of a Grammar School more in line with the need for more professionals to meet the needs of an expanding town. The needs of the lower middle class and the working class were met by the Peel School, founded in 1820 by Sir Robert Peel. Of this school Palmer writing in 1847 comments:

"During the year 1837, a neat, commodious building was erected in Lichfield Street to serve as a school... here about 80 boys now receive the regular instruction which their station in life demands..." (24)

While Peel was lavishing attention and money on his property in Drayton Manor a few miles from Tamworth he was also making a contribution to the education of the town, if not to the sanitation, in the shape of a library and reading room. Presumably the need to educate the working class to their station was greater than the need for them to have decent water, good homes and the possibility of not catching small-pox. In 1865, the educational needs of the working class of Tamworth were further served in the shape of 'Penny Readings'. Commenting on these, Henry WOOD says:

"...an audience of 100 for the first meeting. They were a great success and for the third meeting there were about 600 people...there were readings from Scott's Marmion, Charles Lamb, and Pickwick Papers, with songs and solos. Said the local press: 'Great praise is due to the numerous ladies and gentlemen who at personal inconvenience come forward to show working class people that it is possible to spend a pleasant evening in an agreeable manner without the assistance of the bottle and aided by the evils of the gin palace'. The readings lasted for about five years..." (25)

Tamworth's middle class, like that in the rest of the country, busied itself with the necessary problems of maintaining and securing its position, this took the form of control of the basic economic institutions in the town from production to retailing, control of the local paper, charities, poor law, and of the major ideological apparatuses the church and education. Throughout the century entries in the parish registers and the parish magazine all testify to the overpowering influence of the middle class ideology. Most of the vicars appear rather pompous. In 1873 we get:

"when there is a temptation to spend more than is wise a room where people can spend 1½ hours is invaluable."
(28) in the Parish Magazine

commenting on the reintroduction of 'Penny Readings'. In the magazine for 1876 we get:

"The school of industry is doing well. Its object is to prepare children for service..."

In 1877 the vicar enjoins that no one should give to beggars but should give to the church:

"...instead of assisting a class who go about to prey on the public, who eat of the bread of idleness after the work of hypocrisy..."

These comments are typical at a time when there was the beginnings of unrest in the mining industry, to the extent of strikes and consequent hardship for many of the working class members of the Town.

The local paper for the period is no less provincial, Victorian and middle class. The papers from 1879-1900 are

in no way 'local' in any news content sense: sees itself as concerned with issues of national and international interest, treating its readers to long, dense and serious articles of the day. Its underlying appeal is to its middle class audience of middle and possibly lower middle class readers and one of its concerns is to stress the moral worth of thrift, honesty, hard work, duty, responsibility and when necessary to any infractions of these, especially by the lower classes.

Tamworth of the 1870's seems to have been a confidently middle class town, that is at the ideological and power levels. Social relations were based on class lines as too was the ecological configuration of the town. All of the economic institutions were in the hands of the middle class as were the ideological apparatuses in the form of education, the media and the church. Leisure where it was not provided by the middle class in order to improve and control the lower orders seems to have been of the traditional ale house variety.

That the working class was separate from the other classes, both socially and geographically, is evidenced by the Public Health Enquiry 1852: there is little direct evidence of the specific social groups which emerged within the working class but there can be little doubt that the town was not homogenous. However, the town was dominated by two heavy industries - mining and clay work. At best these industries employed some threequarters of the population, with mining accounting for half.

Also, much of the industrial development took place outside the town, thus forming single class occupational communities. In a document submitted to the Ministry of Health by the

Mayor and Aldermen of Tamworth in 1912 called 'proposed alterations of the Boundary of Tamworth' we get the following statement:

"The bulk of the population in the borough consists of miners and their families, whose livelihood is earned at the collieries in the neighbouring parishes, and who have congregated in the borough and their interests are identical with their fellow miners in the neighbouring parishes...Many of the areas contiguous and immediately adjacent to the Borough are no longer rural but have become urban, possessing all the advantages of the Borough but having no direct share in its government..."

This special type of industrial development: satellite urban villages round a larger town may have hastened the emergence of class consciousness but paradoxically delayed its expression until the villages were incorporated into the town.

As the twentieth century progressed Tamworth became increasingly working class. The Co-Operative Society went from strength to strength - it is still the only large store in the town. Trade Unionism was increasingly reported in the local press and after 1912 the inevitable council house began to appear. Industrial conflict reflected both national and local issues with strikes, lock outs and various fights with authority. After the 1939-45 war the Labour Party took over civic power and have, with few interruptions, held it ever since. Alongside this the working men's clubs were springing up in a variety of localities the reflection of the now dominant working-class culture.

Traces of pre-industrial Tamworth still exist in the buildings. The church obviously, the castle, object of much civic pride and conservation activity by the middle classes of the borough. The Tamworth of middle class hegemony is all but extinct: no theatre, no literary or musical societies to speak of, no book shop nor antique shop, little in the

way of concessions to middle class life in the shape of whole food shops or expensive clothes shops. The shops serve a working class clientele with working class goods in the best traditions of modern consumerism. The people reflect, even on the most casual observation 'working classness': in their clothes, in their size, in their obvious injuries and poor health, in their modes and manners and their conversation and accent. And these people seek their entertainment in the clubs and pubs of the surrounding area.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In the Tamworth Parish Magazine for November 1873 there is a reference to a Working Man's Club. While it is not clear if this is a Working Man's Club in the true sense, the tenure of the article is that it was a late, Solly-type exercise on the part of the Tamworth middle class, intended to keep the workers off the street, out of the ale house and using their time in an edifying manner.
2. PARKIN, Frank. Class Inequality and Political Order, PACA Jan. 1972, p.81.
3. Works which use the concept of 'deference' to understand aspects of working class behaviour are: MACKENZIE and SILVER, Angels in Marble and NORDLINGER, Eric, Working Class Tories. Both works provide evidence that some working class people accept values which confirms their inferiority and are prepared to endorse the existing order by voting for the Conservative Party. Deferential attitudes are associated with a view of society as constructed of a set of interdependent hierarchies which is often produced in the context of face-to-face contact with employers in a multi occupational structure, especially one based on small concerns. Nordlinger in his work puts forward a 'stable theory' of democracy' in which he argues that for a liberal democracy to exist when the lower orders are numerically superior a significant number of them must vote for an elite party. Works using a view of the working class in 'aspirational' terms are not so common. CARTER, Michael, Home School and Work, produces a typology of the working class which includes an aspirational

category.

4. PARKIN, Frank, op cit. p.83. The importance of education in the exercise of control over the working class and to the diffusion of middle class values is well illustrated by JOHNSON, Richard: Educational Policy and Social Control in Early Victorian England: in STANSKY, Peter: Government and Society in Victorian Britain.

"....education of the poor was, indeed, one of the strongest of early Victorian obsessions...the conditions of the poor came almost to mean the condition of their education...The attack on working class life was comprehensive: lack of 'civility' language, sports, pubs, dialect, irreligion: political beliefs of articulate working men were represented as 'perverted opinions'; popular literature was condemned: the solution was authoritative direction of sentiment through education".

5. ENGELS, Frederick. Quoted in: DYOS, H.J. Ed. The Study of Urban History, Arnold, 1968.
6. For an interesting and sensitive account in the subtle gradations in status of the working class in Salford in the first quarter of this century, see ROBERTS, Robert, Manchester University Press, The Classic Slum, 1971, Chapter 1, pages 1-16. He says: 'Inside the working class as a whole there existed, I believe, a stratified form of society whose implications and consequences have hardly been fully expired'. Further to the point about the effects of middle class educational policy he says: 'By 1900, however, those cherished principles about class, order, work, thrift and self help...long taught and practised by the Victorian bourgeoisie, had moulded the minds of even the humblest...Dicelely they accepted a steady decline in living standards and went on wishing for nothing more than to be 'respectful' and 'respected' in the eyes of men. For them the working class caste system stood natural, completedand

inviolable'.

7. PARKIN, Frank, op cit, p.81.
8. FOSTER, John, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1975, p.4.
9. RUNCIMAN, W.G. Relative Deprivation and Social Justice, RKP, 1966, p.9.
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11. YOUNG, Michael and WILLMOTT, Peter: Family and Kinship in East London.
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13. Eric HOBBSBAWM: Industry and Empire, Penguin, 1969, p.81.
14. PALMER, Tamworth Tower and Town, 1845.
15. HOBBSBAWM, op cit, p.85.
16. Public Health Enquiry into Tamworth, 1852.
17. ibid.
18. ibid.
19. ibid.
20. ibid.
21. ibid.
22. ibid.
23. HOBBSBAWM, op cit, p.93.
24. Henry WOODS: Borough by Prescription.
25. ibid.

CHAPTER 9

THE CLUBS AND THE WORKING CLASS

As has been suggested Working Men's Clubs are arenas for working-class action. Historically they have both reflected and contributed to working-class culture. They have always provided for working class interests in the context of the way of life which emerged in the working class in response to the conditions of industrialisation and which was consolidated in the latter part of the 19th century and early part of the 20th century. This culture was essentially non revolutionary, not a challenge to capitalism but an accommodation. Producing such institutions as trade unions, the Labour Party, the Co-Operative Movement and Working Men's Club. Each of these has its own dimension of accommodation. Not least the Working Men's Club. As was suggested above the club has been a non participating member of working class culture. Satisfying leisure and out of work interests with no attempt at political understanding and debate. Reflecting a fait accompli rather than a challenge. One more passive component of the passive culture of a passive working class.

Much of this is history. That the Working Men's Club reflected working as class culture is something of a sociological truism. However, this may be used to obtain further insights. If within this accommodation changes are taking place then these too will be reflected in the club movement. Having looked at a number of Working Men's Clubs it seems to me that this is indeed so. Thus without attempting the not very productive task of constructing some kind of typology I intend to look at two extreme types of club and through this perhaps gain some insight into what may be happening to the working class.

KETTLEBROOK WORKING MEN'S CLUB. An old part of Tamworth about a mile from the town centre, Kettlebrook is characterised almost completely by 19th century terraced housing. A series of interlocked streets abut a main road. A few shops, a post office, a betting shop, the local football ground, an old Methodist Church built in 1897, long unused but now the home of the Salvation Army and the Working Men's Club complete the facilities.

The population is mixed occupationally within the normal range of manual jobs. It is rather inbalanced as to age since there are a much greater proportion of older people (over retirement age) than might be expected and far less young people (under twenty five). As old people die their homes are being increasingly taken over by younger people who take a lot of time and money renovating the properties. This group is bringing a newer dimension to the community. No non manual workers live in the area. The club is a converted house extended beyond recognition. There are three rooms. A large 'concert' room with serried rows of tables and chairs, more often used for bingo than anything but sometimes the scene of the disco, and a bar. Leading off there is a small room with no bar occupied by a snooker table, two fruit machines, two space invaders and a juke box which doesn't work. Adjacent is a bar like room with seats around the walls, groups of tables and a dart board. There is little concession to comfort, no carpets, poor heating and dingy paint and decoration peeling, often beyond the plaster to the laths beneath.

Its period of success was in the 1940's when the area was relatively prosperous from work in the mines and clay works. Then, I am told at 8 o'clock on weekends it was not possible to get in. Waiter service was provided (common in many

clubs in the area until recently and still common in some areas). Things have changed. The fairly prosperous miners and clay workers have become poor pensioners and the area has suffered over the last thirty years progressive decline. The decrepitude of the area is reflected in the club. Crushed in spirit and lacking any major source of funds it struggles impotently to make ends meet and expresses a proletarianism and traditionalism no longer part of the working class perspective. The younger members who frequent the club (the over forties mainly) and the older members, still represent older values. Often not well articulated nor rooted in harsh economic conditions, insecurity and uncertainty which gave rise to them (although this reality is becoming more of a factor in the lives of people in the area), they now stand along side the possessiveness produced by relative affluence and the need for consumer goods. However, values expressed and actions indicate a degree of solidarity and co-operation deriving from an almost vestigial sense of common predicament. An uneasy sense that some human things matter. That caring and sharing are possible that the old are important and that the sick and the poor are not reprehensible.

GLASCOTE WORKING MEN'S CLUB. The only club which I approached which would not see me. The club is also situated about a mile from the town centre. Once again in an old part of Tamworth, early prosperous because of the clay and coal industries. Terraced houses, of the meanest variety, were once dominant. In fact the original club was founded in one of these terraced houses. Now moved to much larger premises. In the 1940's and 1950's the club 'ticked along' declining as the area and its industry declined. In the 1960's and

1970's the area began to expand, abutting, as it does, open country the expansion was extensive. Acres of land were covered with houses. Some public but the bulk of them private. Tamworth, 'expanding town' had really begun to expand. This attracted people, not only from Tamworth but from Birmingham. Most of them fairly young and at least in the early stages relatively affluent. Buying a home became the norm. The car and the other consumables followed.

Glascote club expanded too. Rapidly. Membership increased as did the use of the club which became a comfortable place to spend time away from home.

The club is based, once again, on an old house. Once again converted beyond recognition. There is a very large 'concert room' which is big enough to hold boxing tournaments. A very comfortable well decorated carpeted lounge in the warm, intimate (soft lights gentle colours) modern style. No poverty here. The room is better than most pubs in Tamworth. There is also a sports room equipped with snooker table, table tennis and facilities for darts, dominoes and cards. All these rooms have their own bar. There is a small conference room. In the wide parquet-floored entrance hall are the inevitable fruit machines promising prizes of up to one-hundred pounds. Unmistakably a Working Men's Club of very superior quality.

There is little sign here of an older working class.

Although some of the older members, ex-miners and the like, are a squat cloth capped (literally) presence casting a quizzical eye on a world they are increasingly unable to understand. The dominant group however, both in the sense of running the club, and in being the loudest and most obvious are the younger, house owning incomers. Smartly

dressed, often accompanied by their wives having arrived by car parked in the ever expanding car park (recently dilapidated tennis courts were removed for more car parking). There are very few 'human' problems for this group. The problem, the concerns and awareness are holidays, cameras, videos, cars, tape decks and so on. Much 'wealth' is worn: large, multi functional digital watches, heavy rings, chunky bracelets, open shirts reveal gold chains with meaningless talismen, gold ingots suspended from them. Children bring to the club masses of toys to amuse themselves. A new confidence with money is revealed by the casual casting of ten and twenty pound notes onto the bar to pay for drinks and a lack of concern for the accuracy of change. There is no need for penny pinching concerns. At least in public. There must at least be a show of financial security.

There is no human predicament for this group. The common predicament is how much off what? Where? You have to look after yourself dont' you?

Glascote Club is the glossy representation of these views and tells something of the working class as it is now.

Reference was made above to the post 1945 debate on the position of the working class. Sociologists, it was suggested, have attempted, over the last thirty years, to plot the course of change within this numerically significant group. Produced in response to industrialisation it has changed as industrialisation has changed. From a relatively cohesive working-class culture, local differences producing differences of emphasis rather than significant deviations, there developed a more fragmented working class. In parts of this working class increasing success in securing a better share of the products of capitalism saw a breakdown of older

more collectivist values in favour of a more belligerent aggressive individualism rooted firmly in consumption. As Jeremy Seabrook says:

"Human lives have taken root in the products of capital and its culture..." (1)

in much the same way that human lives took root in earlier forms of capitalist production. Remnants of this 'old' culture persist. Occasionally taking modern political form in the shape of miner's protests of 1970 and 1974. There are also groups in transition, freed of the older cultural ties but not fully integrated as consumers into the new life of the working class. This group is identified as having largely confused and incoherent images of themselves and the society of which they are part.

However, the thrust of development lies not in the persistence or resurgence of an older response to conditions which no longer exist, nor, even less, in the prospect of cohesive protest based on thought and felt alternatives. Nor yet does it lie in a groping and confused effort to understand what is happening. It lies rather in an infinitely more passive response than hitherto:

"The evolution of Western Society begins to look less an age of leisure and repose than a time of drugged somnolence..." (2)

There is no longer the sense of shared predicament among the working class, human and humane reactions to a harsh economic environment have gone, there is no longer the vision of what could be achieved. Of what could be better.

"People who have been shaped by the market place no longer demand anything other than what the market place offers for they have forgotten, and eventually will never have learnt that any other possibility exists." (3)

This 'new' working class has been shaped by thirty years of being increasingly bound onto capitalism. High wages, the

welfare state and concession on holidays, work conditions and the like have taken away, at least until recently, the worst aspects of poverty, deprivation and bad working conditions. This has however been accompanied by a process of:

"...disarming and dispossessing the working class: rendering it less able to propose other visions of society." (4)

This has occurred at great loss cost in solidarity sharing and co-operating. Gone are even the rudiments of a lived and felt alternative. Life for the working class becomes:

"....a squabble over the spoils of industrial production rather than a debate about what constitutes a decent and dignified life, what human needs are and how best they can be fulfilled." (5)

This process of reduction in vision and purpose has been accompanied by a reduction in skills and the removal of many people from the workplace all together. Also, work is increasingly directed at the production of things not connected with abiding human needs:

"The labour of the working class is increasingly becoming detached from products and services which are directly identifiable with human needs." (6)

Once labour was necessary. This necessity produced strength. Poverty and subordination gave rise to dignified and stoical resistance. Work now demands less and less of people. The values of community and concern have been replaced by buying and selling:

"The shopping malls offer everything, and people have nothing left to give. Their abilities, skills, power and possibilities remain choked within them." (7)

Men are increasingly unable to express themselves outside of market transactions, outside of what is bought. The skills of make-do-and-mend have gone or going, are redundant. Responsibilities for others are handed over to specialists. There is no longer an ability to cope with loss and suffering. There is only left misdirected protest, a weakening

of solidarity and common purpose. There is an estrangement from each other.

This picture of the 'new' working class is plain in any Working Men's Club only blurred in some places by regional differences in the pace of response to these inevitable changes. To quote Jeremy Seabrook again:

"In many ways, the dominant model within the contemporary working class is shaped out of elements of the older 'rough' ways of living: what were regarded by a majority as improvidence, irresponsibility, selfishness, living in the present, an absence of moral values, have all been transformed, if not into virtues, at least into general norms; whereas the older prevailing way of life - with its endurance of frugality, self denial and deferring joys and pleasures until they disappear - become a deterrent, the worst that can happen to you, a sign of failure. These things have been devalued, because the possibility of human resources as a substitute for money with the dynamic of the economy, which is all about selling to those who were recently poor..... Traditional social determinants have decayed...they (the working class) are reduced and denuded to the most basic needs and instincts, which they are invited to express only through what is bought...All that is left is a bare bundle of appetites and instincts, delivered to the market place." (8)

This is an unfashionable thesis criticised by those who hope for a resurgence of older values in the context of a period of more repressive capitalist endeavour. Also criticised by those who look back to a diabolical past of pain, poverty, suffering, sickness and premature death. Typical of this position is:

"...are working-class children better off than they were two or three generations ago? Any sane and sensitive person, with even a vague knowledge of the bad old days, would, you'd suppose, return a confident yes. ...But surely Mr. Seabrook could distinguish a live child, however degraded by digital watches and potato crisps, from a dead one? And surely he will prefer the former?.....It is capitalism, Mr. Seabrook gloweringly insists, that swept the lovable proletarians away.....As a version of history this seems too simple to be interesting - on a par with creeds which ascribe the world's ills to Jewry or rays from outer space." (9)

Overall this misses the point. The position taken here is that material improvement is undeniable but has been dearly bought. The moral inheritance produced by poverty has been forgotten and this is a loss. Whether the 'new' working class is better or worse depends on where you stand. From inside the Working Men's Club it is an unpromising creation.

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